

THE SPORT DEVELOPMENT IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOL  
(S•DIAT) FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF SPORT-IN-  
DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN AFRICA

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## **A TOOL FOR IMPACT ASSESSMENT IN THE FIELD OF SPORT DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA (ABSTRACT)**

Funding agencies and governments are investing millions of currency in sport development programmes in a myriad of African countries annually. Many are doubtful about the benefits or returns of their investments. It became clear at a 'Measurement and Evaluation Experts' Workshop hosted by UNICEF in February 2005, that there is a world-wide need for impact assessment within the sport+ and +sport frameworks. At that stage, the Sport-in-Development Impact Assessment Tool (S•DIAT) was in a preliminary phase and focused on the assessment of impact of sport-related programmes in impoverished communities in South Africa.

The conceptual framework for the development of the tool taps into merging paradigms and multi-disciplinary synthesis of an empirically grounded knowledge base of variable- and account-centred methodologies within the academic fields of differential levels of Social Impact Assessment (SIA), the anthropology of development (dealing with impacts across time and potentially-affected systems of human environment) and strategic management. With the focus on empowerment through research, a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach has been adopted.

Various case studies in Africa contributed to the refinement of a tool that can be used for assessment of sport-related impact, from grassroots (community-based) to a macro-level (for inter-continental comparative analysis). The case studies include the following: i) Contextual information and a needs' analysis of elite African athletes where data was collected during the 1999 and 2003 All Africa Games; ii) Methodological refinement for triangulated data in 2004 during a national study of the impact of democracy on women and girls in South Africa's sport and recreation sectors; iii) Development of the PART (Participatory Action Research Training) model and refinement of indicators through several impact studies of the Australia Africa 2006 Active Community Clubs Initiative implemented in Southern Africa; iv) Refinement of methodology, baseline data and success indicators in alignment with the Millennium Development Goals through a national sport-for-development 'Mass Participation Programme' known as Siyadlala (2004-2006); and v) The implementation of the tool for facilitating sport and recreation provision by local government at a local community within the City of Johannesburg.

The tool measures impact according to two main indicator bands relating to 'the management and delivery of a programme' and the impact on 'human and social development'. Each band consists of several indicator fields and 50 potential indicators which can be adapted to assess impact at different levels (from macro to micro). It can be implemented during different phases of programme development as it is premised on a pre-post research design which allows for a cyclic process of monitoring and assessment.

Currently, training is taking place for the basic application version of the tool which will also be accessible in electronic format so that implementers can monitor and access the impact of their programmes, and utilize the results for future planning and implementation. The tool may have far reaching results in generating employment opportunities, building capacity for the localized programme planning, monitoring and assessment, and generating a knowledge base through which funding agencies can be informed about the value of their products and returns on their investments.

# **THE SPORT DEVELOPMENT IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOL (S•DIAT) FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF SPORT-IN-DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN AFRICA**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Funding agencies and governments are investing millions of currency in sport development programmes in a myriad of African countries annually. This has particularly escalated since the United Nations proclaimed 2005 as the International Year for Sport and Physical Education (United Nations, 2003). In the absence of validated evidence, many such agencies are doubtful about the returns on their investments and there is a lack of comparative results from one programme evaluation to another (Coalter, 2005). It became clear at a Measurement and Evaluation Experts' Workshop hosted by UNICEF in January and February 2005, that there is a global need for impact assessment within the sport-for-development (+Sport Model) and development-for-sport (Sport + Model) framework (UNICEF, 2005).

A broad developmental framework of sport development in terms of equal provision of access to opportunities, systems and structures for participation at different levels has increasingly become part of national policy frameworks (Houlihan & White, 2002). As the value of sport and physical activity is increasingly being recognized in poverty alleviation programmes and development interventions for vulnerable populations such as indigenous communities (Cairnduff, 2001) or 'youth-at-risk' (Nichols, 2004), various impact studies have provided evidence of the effect and value of such projects (DaCosta & Miragaya, 2001).

## **RATIONALE FOR TOOL DEVELOPMENT AND IMPACT STUDIES**

The academic discourse of impact studies determining the effect of physical activity on humans in a variety of contexts, is very diverse. By analyzing 110 studies incorporated in the UK Sports Monitor, an analytical framework for potential impact indicators (Sport England, 2005) could be developed. Unique contextual dynamics, diverse paradigms and methodologies complicate inter-case comparisons. Translating and clustering the findings into potential areas of impact, construct fields on which potential impact can be registered. It also points towards a need for a comprehensive

methodology whereby the effectiveness of various programmes can be monitored in different contexts (Coalter, 2005).

The conceptual framework for the development of the S•DIAT (Tool) tapped into merging paradigms and a multi-disciplinary synthesis of an empirically grounded knowledge base of variable-and accounted-centred methodologies within the field of Social Impact Assessment (Rossi *et al.*, 1999; Taylor *et al.*, 1990). Multi-level analysis (Ingersoll, 1990) and various kinds of experimental, as well as pre- and post-project designs offer various possibilities for analysis of impact data within third world contexts (Finsterbusch & Partridge, 1990). The anthropology of development, sport psychology and sport management were other fields that offered valuable insights as they dealt with impacts across time and identified potentially affected systems of human environment and aspects of policy, planning and resource utilization (Burnett & Uys, 2000).

Various case studies in Africa contributed to the refinement of the Tool that can 'measure' sport-related impact (on a grading scale from 'negative' to 'very high') in different contexts and at different levels (from micro-, to meso- and macro-level). The case studies that serve to develop different aspects of the Tool, include the following: i) Contextual information and needs analysis of elite African athletes where data was collected during the 1999 and 2003 All Africa Games (Burnett, 2002); ii) Methodological refinement for triangulation and clustering of data according to themes based on a national study of the impact of democracy on the status of girls and women in different sport and recreation sectors of South Africa (Burnett, 2004); iii) The development of the PART (a model for Participatory Action Research Training) and refinement of indicators through several impact studies for the Australia Africa 2006 Active Community Clubs Initiative implemented in Southern Africa (Burnett & Hollander, 2005); iv) Refinement of methodology, baseline data and success indicators in alignment with the national priorities and the Millennium Development Goals through a national mass participation programme in sport and recreation, known as Siyadlala (Burnett & Hollander, 2006a); and v) The implementation of the Tool for the strategic planning and facilitation of sport and recreation in a local community within the City of Johannesburg (Burnett & Hollander, 2006b).

## THE S•DIAT (SPORT DEVELOPMENT IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOL)

A synthesis of paradigms and research results informed the development of two main indicator bands, namely i) Programme management and delivery and ii) Human and community development. For both bands, 25 indicators were developed based on 13 corresponding indicator fields. The former mainly focuses on managerial aspects that are quantifiable, whereas the latter field of ‘social indicators’ utilizes quantitative and qualitative data that allows for a contextual understanding of real-life experiences of stakeholders, presenters or coaches and participants (Burnett and Hollander, 2006a). Social indicators have been developed by various agencies and academics offer a framework for establishing indicator fields to quantify and reflect the change over time of different manifestations of poverty (May, 1998; Woolard & Leibrandt, 2001).

Social impact mainly relates to the eight indicator fields that correspond with ‘health and quality of life’, ‘physical environment’, ‘economy and employment’, ‘crime and security’, ‘education and training’, ‘physical activity, ‘leisure and sport’ and ‘social relations and networking’ (Balatti & Falk, 2002; Cunningham & Beneforti, 2005). All indicators serve to establish baseline data and benchmarks during different developmental phases of programme-implementation (Burnett & Hollander, 2006a). (See Figure 1).

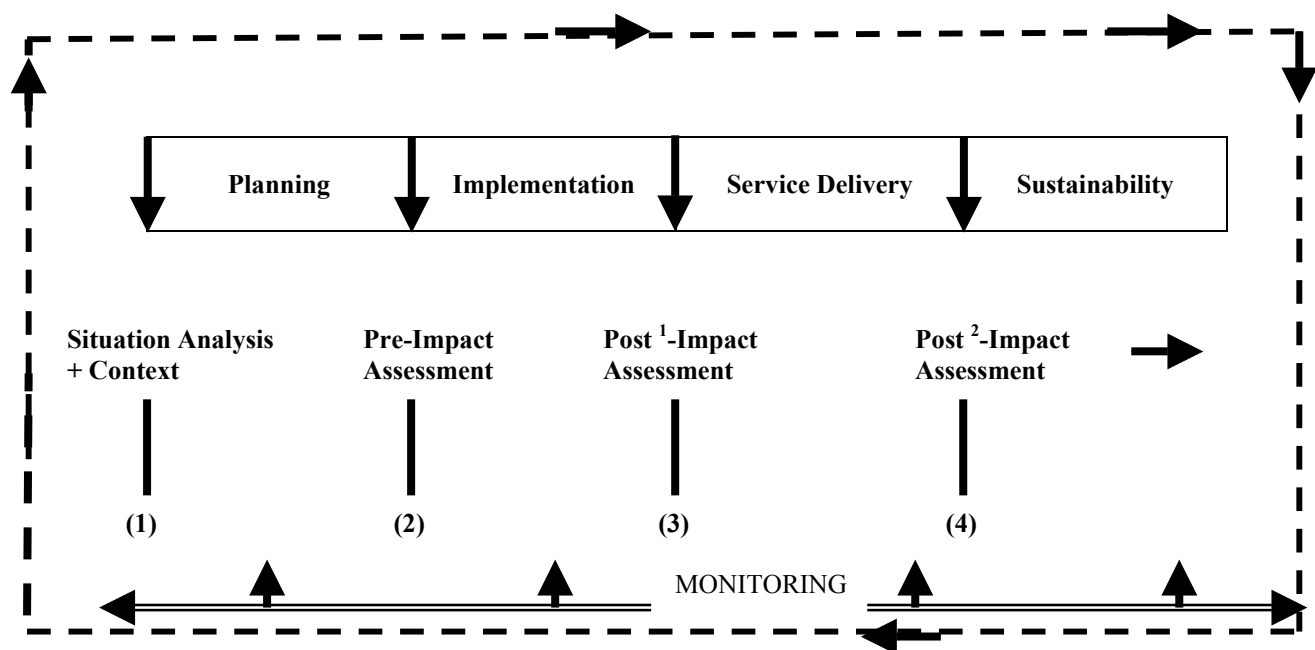
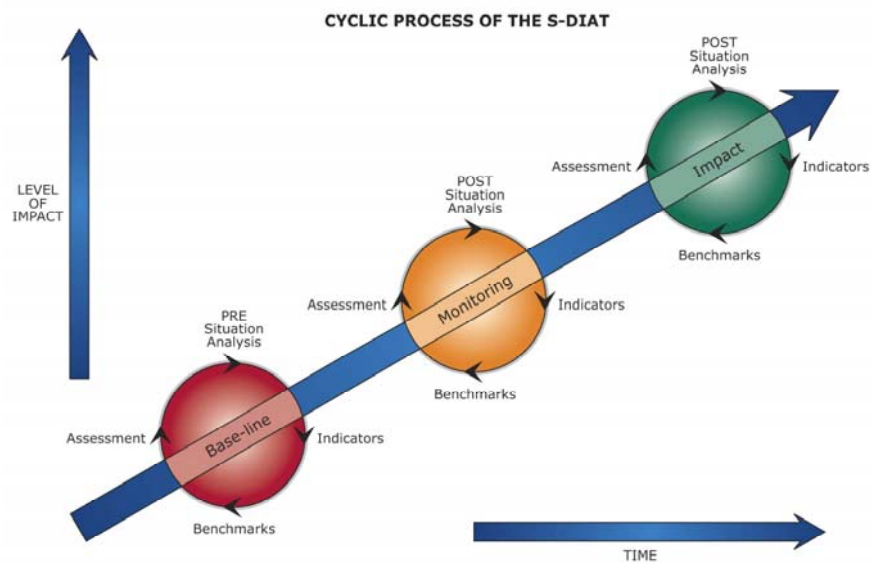


Figure 1. The sport development programme cycle

Assessment can thus be done at different phases of programme development as it is premised on a pre-post design which allows for a cyclic process of monitoring and assessment. The cyclic process ensures that the impact results can be translated into strengths or weaknesses, and as such serve as basis for strategic planning whereby new benchmarks or objectives can be formulated and adaptations made to the programme (See Figure 2).



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**Figure 2: Process of the S•DIAT**

### **IMPLEMENTING THE S•DIAT**

A two-phase design allowed for comparison of baseline (established through a pre-impact study) to benchmark data (established through a post-impact study). It also became clear that the different phases of programme development should be taken into account for conducting an impact study.

Due to the nature of the research being participatory and empowering for participants and researchers, discussions took place on request by either party, and formal reciprocal feedback took place after each phase (Weaver & Cousins, 2004). To enhance the internal validity and reliability of the research, different groups of research participants and methods were used. These included structured interviews with main stakeholders and questionnaires (programme-related experiences, an

HIV/Aids and self-esteem questionnaire), and focus groups and case studies that were conducted. Purposive sampling of stakeholders, representatives of households, community leaders, presenters or coaches and administrators were followed by randomized sampling of participants according to gender, age and the type of activity.

### **AN EXAMPLE OF RESULTS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

The tracing of change according to indicators focusing on ‘active citizenship’ (Putnam, 1995), ‘social capital’ (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Coleman, 1994) and relationships were prioritized in the Active Community Clubs Initiative.

It is in this context of poverty, expectation and perceived obligation of community building and development, that the Initiative aimed to contribute to the building of a community life. Qualitative data indicated that social and moral outcomes outweighed the physical or economic ones, and meaningfully contributed to life-skill development and a social consciousness evidenced in an attitude of care. Relationships based on trust and ‘openness’ developed between coaches and children.

The sport participation of the children created rewarding and enjoyable recreation for their parents, guardians and other community members who experienced pride and feelings of self-worth as they identified with local sport teams. Children were periodically relieved from domestic chores to take part in sport. Communication between parents/guardians and children increased and improved significantly, and a shared identity developed. One Under-15 netball player reported on the renewed interests of parents coming to support them:

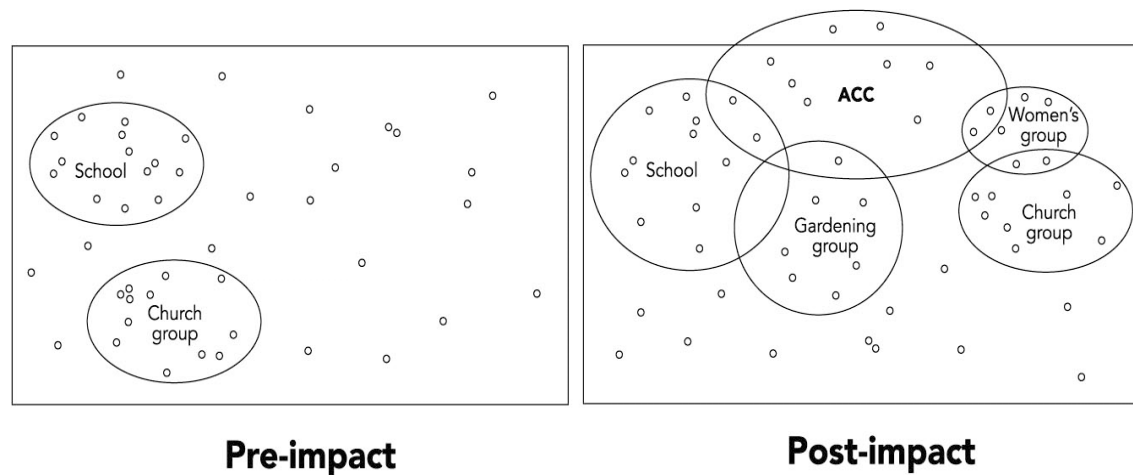
“Our mothers said that they are very much proud of us. They will sing for us and encourage us when we are playing. Even if we lose, they will be encouraging and will say: Don’t worry, next time!”

The coach seemed to be a model and mentor as many volunteers and participants talked about the mutual trust that had developed in the sporting context. Especially girls reported that they felt themselves trusting the coach to talk about “abuse at home”. The trust and shared values found expression in actions of creating networks

of bonding (between players), bridging (between participants and coaches) and linking (between coaches and other stakeholders) (Fukuyama 1995).

In the light of three externally driven projects that had failed in the past few years, the bottom-up, community-based gardening project was considered a most successful example of civil engagement and network interaction by various stakeholders (the school, Community Club and garden group) in the community. This project was considered most successful in contributing to active citizenship (Putnam, 1995). It also signified the development of a civil identity and moral conviction to mobilize social capital for the common good of the community and as such, contributed to the breaking down of the segmented structuring of the community at large (Field, 2003).

Based on the model developed by Fukuyama (2000), the following figure illustrates how the Community Club facilitated networks of trust and reciprocal community engagement in which the pre- and post- mobilization of social capital are evident.



**Figure 3: A comparison of the pre- and post- impact assessment of social capital proves evident in network mobilisation**

These qualitative results obtained through focus group sessions and interviews are also quantifiable and as such translated into a nominal degree of impact ranging from negative (<zero), zero, low (0 to 39%), medium (40-69%), high (70-89%) and very high (>90%). The percentages are indicative of the accumulative number of respondents indicating a change from the baseline indicator in relation to the benchmark. According to the indicator field of ‘social relations and networking’ the

qualitative data demonstrates specific contextual dynamics and occurrences, whereas the percentages calculated from the questionnaires may indicate that there is for instance a 'high impact' concerning the 'increase of supportive networks and membership within the community', as 85% of all participants indicated this.

## **CONCLUSION**

The S•DIAT provides a Tool for monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment of different sport development programmes and incentives. It affords agencies such as the Australian Sports Commission and Sport and Recreation South Africa to align their programme objectives with indicators, and obtain data whereby the success of different programmes can be assessed and compared in a variety of contexts.

Indicators can also be aligned with the UN Millenium goals and thus provide a framework for reporting on their achievement at inter-continental level. Community-based implementers can use it to monitor and establish the impact of their programmes while implementing the results for programme design and strategic planning. The Participatory Action Research Training (PART) model aims to meaningfully contribute to skill development and grass roots empowerment whereby local recipients become co-owners, assessors and planners of their own programmes. The Tool thus provides an exit strategy for developers and is an essential component in sustainable service delivery.

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