

DISCUSSION PAPER

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The Place of Sport in the UN Study on Violence against Children

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OVERVIEW

This paper presents a secondary analysis of supporting documents from the UN Study on Violence against Children. The purpose of the analysis is to identify sport-related material in the documents and gaps in research knowledge about the role of sport in both preventing and facilitating violence against children. This is a complementary document to the IRC study 'Protecting Children from Violence in Sport: A review with a focus on industrialized countries' (forthcoming in 2010), developed by the same research team.

Content analysis was undertaken on material archived for the UN Study, including submissions by UN agencies and non-governmental organizations on research relating to violence against children, and on the country surveys that had been returned by governments as part of the UN Study consultation. A list of search terms was established and each selected text or survey was searched against them. On the basis of these analyses, several key conclusions emerged.

First, there is a marked absence of empirical data about the forms, prevalence and incidence of violence to children in sport and about the best mechanisms for preventing or resolving such problems.

Second, there is a lack of coordination between governments and sport NGOs on the subject of violence against children in sport, and there appears to be no evidence of a functional link between the agencies responsible for sport for development and those responsible for prevention of violence to children.

The findings point to the need to do more, targeted research on violence against children in sport and to assess the efficacy of sport as a tool of violence prevention. Since countries approach the matter of violence to children in many different ways, the establishment of international standards for safeguarding children and for violence prevention in sport is recommended.

Discussion Papers are signed pieces by researchers on current topics of relevance to children's rights and social policies.

The findings, interpretations and conclusions expressed in this paper are entirely those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the policies or the views of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

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The Centre's publications contribute to the global debate on children's issues and include a wide range of opinions. As a centre for excellence, Innocenti also collaborates with external partners and often seeks contributions and inputs from children's rights specialists from a range of disciplines

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THE PLACE OF SPORT IN THE UN STUDY ON VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

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1. Background and Rationale

Sport plays a significant role in many programmes and is used by many agencies as an important tool for health and social development and post-conflict reconstruction. Sport is also recognized as having popular international support and is thus frequently adopted as a mechanism for international advocacy and fundraising.

Despite the widespread use of sporting images and activities in development programmes, sport has often been overlooked as a potential vehicle for the promulgation of child protection and as a site of violence to children.

Research evidence from studies around the world since the mid 1980s indicates that sport is not immune from the problems of child abuse and violence that beset other social settings. Myths about the ‘Cinderella status’ of sport – as a safe haven and problem-free site – have helped to divert attention away from issues such as sexual and emotional abuse, neglect, bullying, physical violence and commercial exploitation (Brackenridge, 2001; David, 2005). Equally, the potential of sport as a protective mechanism for preventing violence to children has rarely been examined.

The research team was brought together by the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre (IRC) to discuss these issues and to identify ways of embedding sport in the overall discourse on child violence both within and beyond UNICEF. The team developed the study titled ‘Protecting Children from Violence in Sport: A review with a focus on industrialized countries’ (forthcoming in 2010).

The team was further charged with identifying gaps in the evidence base about sport and global violence against children. To this end, a secondary analysis was conducted of the textual material originally collected for the UN Secretary-General’s Study on Violence against Children (hereafter the UN Study) that had been undertaken by the independent expert for the study, Professor Sérgio Paulo Pinheiro, for his report presented in October 2006 (see the box) and the *World Report on Violence against Children* launched in November 2006. The purpose of the analysis was to identify sport-related material in the documents and to identify gaps in research knowledge about the role of sport in preventing as well as facilitating violence to children.

The UN Secretary-General’s Study on Violence against Children

The UN Study on Violence against Children was the first comprehensive, global study on violence against children and the first UN study to aim at the systematic involvement of children. Children played an active role in the nine regional consultations held as part of the study, developing recommendations and declarations. The report was submitted to the UN General Assembly in October 2006, and it provides a set of overarching recommendations (see below) relevant to preventing and responding to all forms of violence against children.* More detailed recommendations address violence against children in the various settings of their lives – home and family, schools, care and justice systems, the workplace and the community. The UN Study’s key message is that no violence against children is justifiable and all violence against children is preventable: “This does not only mean sanctioning perpetrators, but requires transformation of the ‘mindset’ of societies and the underlying economic and social conditions and root causes associated with violence.” States are urged to prohibit all forms of violence against children, including sexual violence, with a deadline of 2009 and to actively engage with children and respect their views in all aspects of prevention, response and monitoring of violence against them, together with the creation of child friendly reporting systems and services.

Summary of recommendations Report of the Independent Expert for the United Nations Study on Violence against Children

1. Strengthen national and local commitment and action.
2. Prohibit all violence against children.
3. Prioritize prevention.
4. Promote non-violent values and awareness-raising.
5. Enhance the capacity of all who work with and for children.
6. Provide recovery and social reintegration services.
7. Ensure participation of children.
8. Create accessible and child friendly reporting systems and services.
9. Ensure accountability and end impunity.
10. Address the gender dimension of violence against children.
11. Develop and implement systematic national data collection and research.
12. Strengthen international commitment.

* For documents relating to the UN Study, see <www.violencestudy.org/IMG/pdf/English.pdf>.

Source: UN General Assembly 2006, A/61/299.

The analysis was confined to documents collected in support of the UN Study, including submissions by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), UN agencies and individuals on research conducted on violence against children. An analysis was also made of governments' responses to a questionnaire which was sent out by the UN Study Secretariat to collect information on how governments prevent and respond to violence against children. The majority of the UN Study documents were in English. Documents available in French, German, Spanish and Portuguese were also examined where the language skills of the research team allowed.

Legal age thresholds between child and adult vary widely from country to country, from as low as 12 years to as high as 21 years, but most commonly they fall between 16 and 18 years (AVERT, 2007). UNICEF defines a child as being under 18 years of age. Notwithstanding the fact that legal and sporting age boundaries are not necessarily coterminous, this report adopts the same approach as UNICEF and the UN Study in defining a child as someone under 18 years of age (Pinheiro, 2006, p. 4).

The report of the UN Study adopts the definition of violence used in article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse." It also draws on the definition in the *World Report on Violence and Health* (United Nations, 2002):

the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against a child, by an individual or group, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity.

This paper refers at times to 'sport-related violence'. By this we mean episodes of violence arising not just on the field of play but also in the wider context of sporting activity, such as changing room bullying, harassment by peers, coaches or other authority figures in training and competition, and sexual abuse of athletes by their coaches.

Section 2 begins with a consideration of how sport is defined, since this sets the parameters for our subsequent searches. In section 3 we describe the search strategies and analytical methods we adopted. The somewhat sparse findings of the investigation are presented in sections 4 and 5, leading us to conclude that globally there is either very little provision for prevention of violence in sport or that such work is not coming to the notice of government departments. Some limitations of this study are outlined in section 6, before section 7 sets out key conclusions.

2. Definitions

At face value, sport mostly appears to be a simple, easily understood and non-problematic phenomenon. However, it is variously defined according to the purposes to which it is put. These purposes can range from mere recreation to the pursuit of social and political ends. This variety of interpretations is encapsulated in the sample definitions given below.

The Council of Europe definition of sport is as follows:

'Sport' means all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels. (Council of Europe, 2001)

The sport and development website <www.sportdevelopment.org>, a resource with materials on sport development, offers the following:

Sports development is an equivocally contested term ... It can mean the development of sport for sports sake and equally the use of sport and physical activity opportunities for the development of society – sport as a social instrument ... Sport development deals with the opportunities available for people to progress to their potential in sport, from taking part for fun and health to competition and also encompasses the provision of opportunities for addressing the *social issues* of the day through participation in sport ... Sport for sport's sake deals with activity management, support services and quality of education through coaching with sport for 'social good' dealing with a variety of issues from social integration, *health*, community regeneration, *crime* and *social inclusion*. (accessed 22 June 2007)

The Australian Sports Foundation describes sport in this way:

a human activity capable of achieving a result requiring physical exertion and/or physical skill, which, by its nature and organisation, is competitive and is generally accepted as being a sport. (Australian Sports Foundation, 2009)

For the purposes of this report, UNICEF's definition of sport is adopted, that is:

all forms of physical activity that contribute to physical fitness, mental well-being and social interaction. These include play; recreation; casual, organized or competitive sport; and indigenous sports or games.

Sport involves rules or customs and sometimes competition. Play – especially among children – is any physical activity that is fun and participatory. It is often unstructured and free from adult direction. Recreation is more organized than play, and generally entails physically active leisure activities. Play, recreation and sport are all freely chosen activities undertaken for pleasure. (UNICEF, 2004)

3. Search Strategies and Analysis Methods

Lists of the material archived by UNICEF for the UN Study were provided to the research team by UNICEF staff based in Geneva. The list consisted of 961 documents organized into 41 categories or themes (Annex I). The documents themselves were available in electronic (620) and non-electronic (341) forms. After visual inspection by each member of the research team, a comprehensive list of items was compiled for analysis based on their likelihood of revealing sport-related materials. The resulting list of 315 documents (201 electronic and 114 non-electronic) was adopted for the sport-related search. These account for 33 per cent of the total material.

An FTP website was set up through which most documents could be accessed electronically. Some documents had to be specifically scanned to achieve electronic access. Altogether 227 of the 315 documents were in readable image files and became the sample for content analysis. The 227 documents account for 72 per cent of the selected and an overall 24 per cent of the total population of the documents.

The 227 documents were then searched for the following keywords (Annex II):

- Sport
- Leisure
- Recreation
- Exercise
- Play
- Coach
- Physical education
- Games
- Olympic

Of the 227 documents, 118 (52 per cent) had at least one keyword match. These were further analysed to determine if the subject matter had any relationship to violence in sport. This occurred in only 33 items. The relevant texts from these items were then extracted into a common Word file for further analysis. In the subsequent analysis we identified emerging themes, such as the context in which the violence occurred, characteristics of the perpetrator, and the type of sport involved.

In addition to the archived documents, the country surveys returned as part of the consultation were available via the UN Study website (from 119 countries) (Annex III). These were interrogated against three levels of search words, of which the first two levels were also used for the archived materials (Annex II). In each section of the country survey, as developed by Paolo Pinheiro and his team, any relevant text from each country report was extracted verbatim into a spreadsheet file.

The exact procedure involved:

- (a) locating and copying to a file the UN questionnaire on Violence against Children;
- (b) locating each country's response to the Pinheiro questionnaire (the UN Study website);
- (c) saving the country image file and converting it to a searchable document;
- (d) preparing the spreadsheet (grid);
- (e) scanning each country's response with the search words and populating the grid;
- (f) populating the questionnaire outline with the 'free-standing text blocks with reference pages' from the scan.

The original intention had been to adopt the settings approach for reporting data that had been adopted for the UN Study (e.g. home/family, school and education). However, so few data were found by this exercise that, instead, a hierarchical content analysis was conducted of the extrapolated text from the country surveys to identify emerging themes.

4. Findings from the Archive Documents

As shown above, very little material on sport-related violence was found. Of those 33 items identified that had any relationship to sport and violence, the main themes emerging from the content analysis were children's right to rest and leisure and to engage in play and recreational activity; children's experiences of sexual abuse; sport and exercise used as punishment; and prevention of violence in sport.

In the first theme, children's right to rest and leisure and to engage in play and recreational activity, it appears that child labour often restricts children's possibility of participating in sport and recreation. For example, a study from the Philippines shows that "the burden of poverty falls more heavily upon Filipino girl children. Work robs girl children of the time and energy to rest, play and go to school, hampering their physical and psychological development" (Amorim, Murray and Pallavi, 2004, p. 13). This indicates that girls are more restricted by work than boys. In a study about girl child labour in India, the authors focus on the fact that girls are particularly exploited. They write that "the unique cultural position of the female child is examined, explaining how traditions, values, societal norms and social institutions not only deprive girls of education and recreation, but are directly contributing to their sexual exploitation and diminished moral and psychological development" (Amorim, Murray and Pallavi, 2004, p. 28). A study of Ethiopian child domestic workers in Addis Ababa also shows that recreation and play for most are, for the most part, non-existent (Amorim, Murray and Pallavi, 2004, p. 74).

In theme two, concerning children's experiences of sexual abuse related to sport, only a few cases are mentioned. For example, in India, a male physical education teacher molested a 13-year-old Dalit girl. When the girl complained to her mother, the mother made a complaint against the school but no action was taken against the teacher. One of the female teachers stated that "the harassment of women by men is so common that there's no need to make mountains out of molehills" (Karkara and Jarbeen, 2005, p. 24). Another example is from a study in Zimbabwe where a girl is quoted as saying: "A boy grabbed my breast during sports. I nearly cried because it was so painful" (Leach and Machakanja, 2000, p. 65). Abuse by teachers also seems to occur on sports playgrounds. In Zimbabwe: "The girls showed how teachers 'touch' them, especially [when they are] in secluded places like a storeroom, teacher's quarters or dark corners and on the Sport Ground. When some teachers sent them to their quarters or storeroom they [the teachers] immediately followed, propositioned the girls and at times forced themselves on the girls" (Mitchell and Mothobi-Tapela, 2004, p. 51).

Sport and exercise used as punishment is the third theme that emerged from the content analysis. A study from Fiji found that "boys between the ages of 14 and 17 experienced more indirect assaults, with 13 percent of their responses showing that they were given exercise-related punishments such as 'running around the ground', 'press-ups' and 'sit-ups'" (Beazley et al., 2005, p. 151). Interviews with gang leaders from Ecuador revealed that sanctions for breaking rules could include "physical punishment such as forced exercise and beatings that, at times, may require hospitalisation" (Dowdney, 2005, p. 205).

The fourth theme, prevention of violence in sport, was the one with the most frequent responses found. For example, in

Kapell (2005), examples of how to reduce violence in sport are mentioned, including “having parents, players, coaches and officials sign a code of ethics or good behaviour pledge” (p. 19). In a publication from UNICEF (2003) the point is made that child protection professionals can and do train other professionals who work with children. This includes the training of professionals who work in sports clubs to recognize, react to, report and refer child abuse cases. Homophobic violence is also mentioned, and ways of reducing harassment/violence towards, in particular, gay males in sport and increasing their participation (Sattel, Keyes and Tupper, 1997).

In addition to the four main themes described above, the content analysis also revealed several minor themes:

- a troublingly high acceptance of violence in the culture of sport;
- spectator violence, particularly hooliganism in soccer;
- excessive training of talented child athletes at the expense of their overall physical and mental development;
- child labour in sport and trafficking of young athletes.

One report about violence in sport states that “violence that is illegal in other community settings is sometimes overlooked or even encouraged in sport. Children may experience violence when they are watching a game or event, or directly through team sport involvement, or as elite athletes” (Kapell, 2005, p. 18). This indicates that sport has not been examined to the same degree as other sociocultural contexts when it comes to violence against children. Physical violence in sport, both by participants and spectators, is an issue of concern in many countries: “Sport bodies, internationally and nationally are now taking very seriously the problem of spectator violence – largely but not exclusively involving violence both to and by young people, almost invariably male. ... Driven by dreams of prestige and profit, trainers and parents pressure children into following extremely rigorous training regimes. Young sports protégés become commodities, traded on national and international markets” (UNICEF, 1997, p. 14). Children, particularly boys, have been trafficked as camel jockeys from Pakistan to the United Arab Emirates. According to Morka, it has been a lucrative industry, “and children are especially appealing for this purpose because of their small size. The use of children as jockeys in camel racing is extremely dangerous and can result in serious injury and even death. Boys who lose races are often brutalized by their exploiters, deprived of their salary and food, and mentally and physically abused” (Morka, 2007, p. 20).

In summary, the analysis of the archive documents shows that there is a marked absence of empirical data about the forms, prevalence and incidence of violence to children in sport, and about mechanisms for preventing or resolving such problems. The few examples we have found indicate that some children may experience sport as a very violent arena. This finding points to the need to do more, specifically targeted research on violence to children in sport. Such research can be used to purposively inform sport development agencies about the risks and benefits for children and for preventing violence to children in sport.

5. Findings from the Country Surveys

General observations

In the context of the analysis of the UN Study surveys (from 119 countries), those countries whose responses included the keywords of sport or the leisure or recreation context were first identified. Because of the general nature of the UN Study questions, even when sport was identified, the responses also tended to be quite general. Further, in many cases, the word ‘sport’ formed part of the name of a ministry. This resulted in sport being detected in a country’s response without any specific sport-linked information or actions mentioned. Also, in many countries there were committees, institutions, policies, programmes or agencies where these same ministries were involved in or responsible for general, rather than sport-specific actions or legislation about violence against children. Following are the country-by-country responses where sport or the leisure or recreation context was recognized. Note that the reference for each refers to the number of the actual questions used in the UN Study.

Country cases where sport is identified

- **Iceland:** In the Child Protection Act, Iceland has a verification system for criminal records of sexual offences against children, whereby any particular person who has applied for employment in the domain of sport and leisure (and others) is checked (Question 1).
- **Italy:** Statistics are presented on victims of violence. We do not know what kind of violence, though we are led to believe that it is sexual abuse. Some has been perpetrated by sports instructors (2000: 1 victim; 2001: 1 victim; 2002: 2 victims) and sports centre employees (2000: 0 victims; 2001: 2 victims; 2002: 0 victims) (Question 45).
- **Kenya:** The responses acknowledge that they have discriminatory practices and policies in a number of areas, including recreational sport (Question 2).
- **Liechtenstein:** The government supports different organizations in the area of recreation that deal with violence (Question 42).
- **Slovenia:** As an exception, child labour is permitted in sports settings (children under 15 years old) (Question 1). The Slovenian response includes a table about child victims in the sport context, though precisely what forms of victimization they experienced is not specified. Between the ages of 0 and 14 years there are reported to have been 33 male and 16 female victims in sports facilities. Between the ages of 14 and 18 years, this increased to 169 male and 96 female victims in sports facilities. No other information is given about this table (Question 22).
- **Switzerland:** Switzerland has an Office Fédérale du Sport that is responsible for the prevention of sexual abuse in sport. No details are provided about the Office or what exactly it does (Question 26). It also has Associations de la Jeunesse, de Loisir et de Sport that engage in activities, information and prevention related to violence against children (sexual abuse) (Question 35). Switzerland reports a number of different projects about violence and it funds specific projects for the prevention of sexual abuse in leisure and sport (Question 42). The Office Fédérale du Sport has done work on preventing sexual abuse of children in sport. Organizations connected with this work are the Swiss Olympic Committee, various sports federations and other specialized organizations. It is mentioned that Swiss

sports organizations have plans to do more on this subject and have already established objectives, measures, instruments and evaluation of measures to be undertaken (Question 54).

- **Thailand:** Though no specific details are given, Thailand reports that it has a Boxing and Combat Sports Act (law) that identifies violence as an issue (Question 2). Children in boxing are also mentioned in Question 47.
- **USA:** The Federal Department of Health and Human Services is reported to have provided financing to, for example, different organizations, programmes and funds specifically to address violence against children. One of those organizations is the National Alliance for Youth Sports (Question 29).

Specific questions in the UN Study about sport and which countries have responded

UN Study Question 4: Indicate whether any specific legislative provisions address all forms of violence including physical, sexual and psychological violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment and sexual exploitation against children which takes place in: [...].

Fourteen countries answered the subquestion about sports and sporting facilities:

- **Albania:** General legislation. No specific laws to address violence against children in sporting facilities.
- **Austria:** General provisions apply in sport and sporting facilities.
- **Canada:** There is a criminal code which applies to all forms of violence. This covers violence against children and includes if such violence occurs in sport and facilities.
- **DR Congo:** General legislation includes persons that work with children in sport.
- **Kenya:** No specific legislation deals with sport or sporting activities related to children but the Children Act provides that a child shall be entitled to leisure, play and participation in cultural and artistic activities.
- **Liechtenstein:** A general rule in the Criminal Code is applied to all forms of violence against children regardless of where such violence occurs.
- **Lithuania:** There is a principle of humanism provided for in the Code about the use of punishments. Here it is stipulated that there is a prohibition of torture, and cruel and humiliating behaviour.
- **Malawi:** Though it answered the question, no connection is made to violence against children.
- **Mali:** An article in the penal code is about practices in sport that can be dangerous/harmful for the health of the children.
- **New Zealand:** All forms of violence against children are to be investigated under either the Police Act or the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act respectively. Each national sports body has, in place, its own complaints procedures to address violence in sport.
- **Norway:** The provision of the Penal Code concerning violence against children is extended to all such incidents regardless of where they may happen.
- **Occupied Palestinian Territory:** No specific law is identified, but the Ministry of Youth and Sport uses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as a framework to guide its work.

- **Sri Lanka:** A sports law governs this subject, but does not contain specific provisions on the protection of children from violence or on corporal punishment. These are dealt with under the general law.
- **Thailand:** It has a Boxing and Combat Sports Act (1985) which contains provisions for minimum age and security equipment.

UN Study Question 20: Provide information on any complaints procedures relating to all forms of violence against children perpetrated in: [...] [with subquestion on sports and sporting facilities].

Five countries answered this question:

- **Belize:** Complaints can be forwarded to the department of human services and/or the police.
- **Hungary:** A Parliamentary Commissioner for Civil Rights who promotes protection of the constitutional rights of the child. There is no description of complaints procedures.
- **Malaysia:** A ‘Toll Free Line’ exists and its main objective is to receive complaints regarding violence against children.
- **New Zealand:** All forms of violence against children are to be investigated under either New Zealand’s Police Act 1958 or the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989 respectively. Each national sports body has, in place, its own complaints procedures to address violence in sport.
- **Singapore:** One Hotline, two e-mails and one website exist where the Ministry of Community Development and Sports provides information and help about such things as complaints.

The countries’ responses to the UN Study lead us to conclude that, in general, violence against participants in sport, and particularly against children in sport, is below the government radar of most countries in the sample. The countries that are known to have done the most to develop anti-violence research, policy and practice in sport, such as Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom, score very poorly on these scans. For example, in the UK the submission made by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children/Child Protection in Sport Unit (NSPCC/CPSU) for government on the complete survey draws attention to the risk factors for sexual abuse in sport and extensive work to instigate national standards to protect children in sport (G. Radford, personal communication, 4 October 2007), but these issues were not reported in the UK country survey response. There is thus a knowledge gap among those who completed the country surveys. Known policy development and research work that has been done in these countries is either not being reported *to* governments or not being reported *by* governments in the UN Study questionnaire.

Where there were frequent mentions of sport-related issues or terms in a country response, it was usually because that country had a government ministry with the actual word ‘sport’ in its name. Frequent mentions of sport in the UN Study country reports is also not a good indicator of a country’s actions on the violence against children front. For example, Singapore had the highest number of sport reference hits but virtually all of these referred to the Ministry of Community Development and Sports (MCDS) by title. Other countries combine ‘youth’ and ‘sport’ in their ministry title,

for example, Albania (Culture, Youth and Sport), Algeria (Youth and Sport), Chad (Youth and Sport), DR Congo (Youth and Sport), Czech Republic (Education, Youth and Sport), Guyana (Youth Culture and Sport) and Hungary (Youth and Sport). The reference to sport is not to be taken as a clear indication of how *much* activity on child protection or violence prevention in sport actually exists in each of these countries, though it may perhaps be an initial indicator. The naming of ministries in this manner emphasizes the link between the two discourses, about youth and about sport, yet these do not appear to be functionally linked in the country reports.

In general, it may be judged that the data were thin and far between. In all the studies analysed, only three empirical studies were referred to: one study in Thailand (related to the Boxing and Combat Sports Act) and some data from Italy and Slovenia. Other than that, governments returning surveys did not report any sport-related data. There was also a striking lack of awareness of sport or sport-related violence in the references to educational policies and programmes in the country reports. We expected this to be one of the more fertile areas for our searches on violence against children, given the traditional role of Physical Education in introducing young people to sport and physical activity.

One exception to which attention may be drawn is the country response of the Occupied Palestinian Territory. It was perhaps the most comprehensive country response to violence against children, perhaps because of the high general awareness of violence among the population. For example:

the NPA [National Plan of Action for Palestinian Children] Secretariat collaborated with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Social Affairs on a report addressing violence against children. The Ministries, including the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, have each completed their own reports on issues such as child labour, sexual exploitation, abusive families and the effects of Israeli violence. (OPT survey report, p. 25)

This might suggest to researchers and policy analysts alike that a study should be done to examine the general context of violence in a war-torn country and the associated awareness of violence against children, specifically that against children in sport.

6. Limitations

Language

The main language for this review was English. However, it may well be the case that, in non-English-speaking countries, or in countries where English is not the first language, different conceptions of sport, child and violence may apply.

Violence prevention in sport

Child protection and violence prevention is embedded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Nonetheless, as pointed out in the UN Study, there are widely differing interpretations and norms for child safety and child violence in different cultures. These differences are thought to be even more marked in the realm of sport: child protection and safeguarding is a relatively recent addition to the international sport policy agenda and, as such, and with some notable

exceptions, is not well developed in very many countries. As the findings of this investigations show, even where a country has an active lobby for child protection in sport, this does not necessarily mean that the issue is understood or accepted by civil servants, politicians or the wider sport community.

Sources

The sources for this investigation were restricted to those documents archived as part of the UN Study. From these a selection was made based on the authors' expertise and experience in the field. It is acknowledged, however, that this could have introduced some bias into the final sample through the initial screening process. Steps were taken to avoid such an occurrence: first, each of the research team members took the original theme-organized reference lists and selected those references they anticipated would be most likely to contain information about sport; then a comprehensive list that included all the researchers' tagged references was prepared. Despite this, and though the team is familiar with most of the sport-related research, references may have inadvertently slipped through the screening process.

7. Conclusions

Review of the documents confirms the limitations of the material in the UN Study archive relating to violence or violence prevention in children's sport. This hypothesis has been supported by the scrutiny of the documents. Evidence on violence against children in sport appears to be all but invisible. The research team's parallel analysis on the available research evidence, beyond the UN Study, about violence and violence prevention in children's sport (UNICEF 2010, forthcoming) reinforces the conclusions of this documentary analysis.

There are some clear conclusions from this parallel analysis, which have been confirmed by this study. First, there is a lack of coordination between governments and sport NGOs on the subject of violence against children in sport. Some state agencies and NGOs known to be active in the prevention of such violence are not liaising effectively enough with the state departments responsible for dealing with violence, children or international development. And, even where there is a high level of violence awareness and violence prevention activity in a country, sport is most often not included in its reports. There is therefore a lot to be done in incorporating sport in the official government and NGO structures that address violence prevention.

Similarly, there appears to be no evidence of a functional link between the agencies responsible for sport for development and those responsible for prevention of violence to children. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child could act as a form of international 'watchdog' for children in sport in this regard. There may also be room for UNICEF and its partners to set up an International Observatory that incorporates both sport for development and violence prevention work.

There is a need for education of those working in NGOs and political communities who are charged with policy responsibilities for children and young people. If the potential benefits of sport for children and for development are to be realized then the policy discourse should reflect both a healthy scepticism and a spirit of vigilance. Sport is neither inherently good nor inherently bad: it is merely a tool or activity.

There is a marked absence of empirical data about the forms, prevalence and incidence of violence against children in sport and about the best mechanisms for preventing or resolving such problems. This finding points to the need to do more, targeted research on violence against children in sport in order to inform sports development agencies and activists about the risks and hazards attaching to sport. The efficacy of sport as a tool of violence prevention has not yet been assessed. Currently, research on violence and violence prevention in sport either ignores children or fails to disaggregate data by child/adult status. Sport research on this subject should therefore focus on youth/children (including age, gender and other backgrounds) and previous studies should be reanalysed to extrapolate data on children.

Countries approach the matter of violence against children in many different ways (including child labour; prevention of sexual/economic exploitation; health promotion; cultural or educational development) so there is no common agreement on what constitutes adequate violence prevention. International standards for safeguarding children and for violence prevention in sport would be a useful measure, especially if monitored through a designated authority within each country. Children and youth also need to be consulted and involved when developing international standards and other mechanisms for addressing violence in sport.

The issue of sport and violence against children needs to be addressed at policy levels within governments and by national and international sports agencies.

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Annex I: Document categories from the UN Study archive and eventual sample

Document categories provided by UNICEF	Total (n)	Sample (n)
1.0 Aggressive behaviour	31	18
2.0 Alternative care institutions	17	5
3.0 Armed conflict	18	2
4.0 Attitudes (towards violence)	5	1
5.0 Child labour	28	7
6.0 Child participation	37	21
7.0 Children with disabilities	7	5
8.0 Child rights	27	14
9.0 Communal initiatives and roles	4	3
10.0 Community-based organizations	3	0
11.0 Community (death squads, gangs, private security guards, vigilantes...)	8	3
12.0 Community services (public health measures...)	34	11
13.0 Corporal punishment (family, law enforcement, school...)	49	13
14.0 Demographics and statistics	9	2
15.0 Domestic workers	2	0
16.0 Economic factors	8	3
17.0 Education programmes	106	33
18.0 Emotional/psychological abuse	10	1
19.0 Gender (issues, violence)	33	13
20.0 Health (diseases, illness, nutrition)	66	11
21.0 HIV/AIDS	59	13
22.0 Home and family (including infanticide, witnessing...)	43	14
23.0 Indicators	11	5
24.0 Indigenous and ethnic minorities	9	4
25.0 Insecure and emergency settings	16	6
26.0 Juvenile justice (children in conflict with the law)	10	2
27.0 Juvenile justice (institutions and systems)	9	1
28.0 Juvenile justice (legal framework and policies)	9	2
29.0 Law (charters, conventions, legislation, policies...)	5	3
30.0 Media and virtual settings	14	4
31.0 Millennium Development Goals	8	6
32.0 Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)	24	4
33.0 Poverty	7	1
34.0 Sexual exploitation	26	4
...		
43.0 Rights-based programming	15	10
44.0 Sexual abuse (rape, exploitation, sex tourism, trafficking...)	37	23
44.1 Sexual abuse (commercial sexual exploitation, trafficking, etc.)	29	9
45.0 Street children	14	1
46.0 UN agencies	29	9
47.0 Violence against women	36	11
48.0 General	52	17
Total	961	315

Annex II: Search words used for the documentary analysis

Level 1 search words (sport-related)

- Sport
- Leisure
- Recreation
- Exercise
- Play
- Coach
- Physical education
- Games
- Olympic

Level 2 search words (violence-related)

Violence [V]

- physical
- sexual
- gender-based
- emotional/psychological
- neglect
- bullying (including hazing)
- HIV/AIDs-related
- political
- internet-based
- other

Level 3 search words

1. Geographic areas:

- Europe
- North America
- Asia
- Africa
- Oceania
- Latin America and the Caribbean
- Australia and New Zealand
- All
- Notes: Gov and NGO

Each of these subdivided by 'setting', i.e.

- home and family
- schools and educational settings
- care and justice institutions
- children in places of work
- children in the community

2. Themes [every reference was also tagged by gender (GE)]:

(a) Governance [GO]

- regulatory statutes/organizations and legal mechanisms/enforcement measures
- non-statutory organization policy and implementation
- procedures
- practices
- programmes/initiatives/interventions
- codes of practice or ethics
- outcomes/impact(s) (studies)
- consultation/buy-in
- management
- participation/giving voice (decision-making) to child athletes/participants
- others

(b) Personnel [P]

- peer athletes
- coaches
- fans/supporters
- officials
- entourage members
- journalists
- others(s)

(c) Education [E]

- physical education
- training/coaching
- leadership
- awareness raising
- community/public education
- other

(d) Data [D]

- monitoring
- evaluation
- academic sources/links
- other

(e) Cases [C]

- examples of case studies/stories that we might wish to flag

Annex III: Country surveys reviewed

Albania	El Salvador	Madagascar	Samoa
Algeria	Eritrea	Malawi	Serbia & Montenegro
Angola	Estonia	Malaysia	Seychelles
Argentina	Ethiopia	Mali	Sierra Leone
Austria	Fiji	Mauritania	Singapore
Bangladesh	Finland	Mauritius	Slovakia
Belgium	Gambia	Mexico	Slovenia
Belize	Georgia	Moldova	South Africa
Benin	Germany	Monaco	Spain
Bolivia	Ghana	Mongolia	Sri Lanka
Bosnia Herzegovina	Grenada	Mozambique	Swaziland
Brazil	Guatemala	Nepal	Sweden
Bulgaria	Guinea	Netherlands	Switzerland
Burkino Faso	Guinea Bissau	New Zealand	Tanzania, UR
Burundi	Guyana	Nicaragua	Thailand
Cameroon	Haiti	Niger	Timor Leste
Canada	Honduras	Nigeria	Togo
Central African Rep.	Hungary	Norway	Tonga
Chile	Iceland	Occ. Palestinian Terr.	Turkey
Colombia	India	Panama	Uganda
Comoros	Indonesia	Papua New Guinea	Ukraine
Congo	Italy	Paraguay	United Kingdom
Dem Rep Congo	Jamaica	Peru	United States
Costa Rica	Japan	Philippines	Uruguay
Croatia	Kenya	Poland	Uzbekistan
Cyprus	Latvia	Portugal	Vanuatu
Czech Rep.	Lebanon	Rep. of Korea	Venezuela
Denmark	Liechtenstein	Romania	Viet Nam
Dominica	Lithuania	Rwanda	Yemen
Dominican Rep.	Luxembourg	Saint Lucia	

Total: 119 countries.