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**Political arena of sport for development and corporate social responsibility – Opportunities and threats**

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Sport for Development (SfD) has now been recognised as a meaningful topic in development circles as well as in scientific communities. Sport is being used increasingly by a variety of institutions as a vehicle to enhance existing development Initiatives and/or reach areas that traditional development finds difficult to access (Levermore 2008). The growth of sport as an instrument to foster social and/or educational development in newly industrializing and developing countries can be seen as a direct response to the call for implementation of the UN Millenium Development Goals via Sport (Vanden Auweele et al., 2006).

On the other hand Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is taking on an increasingly important role not only on the business agenda, but also on the political, academic, and media agenda. The modern perspective of CSR recognizes the gain in significance of CSR as a management concept in almost all industries over the last decade. Surveys show that 70% of the 400 world leading companies notice that having a CSR strategy is nowadays essential (Hovemann, Breitbarth & Walzel 2009). Hence it is no surprise that CSR initiatives by business entities discover more and more the area of sport for development as working field and communication platform. This is in line with the outcomes of the first UN-IOC Forum which stresses the importance of partnerships in the field of SfD. The presentation will give some examples of latest developments concerning networks and co-operational initiatives in the field of SfD and CSR .

Discussion and conclusions

Sport for development and CSR can be described as political arena (Van Eekeren, 2006), where interdisciplinary cooperation between different actors are common and where social, commercial and political interests are clashing or complementing one another. This collaboration of different parties in Sport for Development and CSR brings together governmental, non-governmental, private and transnational actors in partnerships. These partnerships vary from web-based platforms for networking purposes (sportanddev.org) to international, sometimes global partnerships and networks. Whereas opportunities for developmental project initiatives and for business companies using CSR measures are quite obvious (financial funding on the one hand and demonstration of social responsibility on the other hand), the threats or limitations of CSR in Sport for development are more complex: lack of evaluation, social parties involved may be

prejudiced against business companies, and tarnished reputation of (professional) sport are possible limitations (Levermore 2010). Even more important is to strengthen the resources of sport actors in networks, for example through further research on influence of sport on social change or through evaluation of projects in SfD and CSR.

#### References:

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