



RÉPUBLIQUE
FRANÇAISE

*Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité*



Sports infrastructure

.....

TECHNICAL GUIDE



© Ines ARAMBURO / AFD

#WorldInCommon



SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE TECHNICAL GUIDE - FEBRUARY 2025

Document produced by the “Sport” team within AFD Group’s Urban Development, Planning and Housing Division, with contributions from the following divisions of AFD Group’s Evaluation and Learning Department: Environmental and Social Support, Sustainable Development, Education, Training and Employment, Social Link, and Productive Systems, as well as from the Territorial Attractiveness, Culture, and Heritage Division of Expertise France.

MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION

Romain André, Audrey Guiral-Naepels and Lise Piqueras

AUTHORS

Chloé Coste de Bagneaux, Nina Hadji Marie-Sainte, Simon Nyam and Lise Piqueras

EDITORIAL SUPPORT

Entreprise Alcélia :

Patrice Guera, Lucie Lenne and Julien Puiffe

AFD GROUP CONTRIBUTORS

Morgane Beaudouin, Amance Bustreau, Typhaine Christiaen, Christophe Dias, Assiba Djemaoun, Jérémy Frere-Lopez, Daniel Gauthier, Mitchell Gilles-Schouchana, Morgane Guilnard, Marine Marmorat and Camille Tchounikine

Foreword

The world today is home to 1.8 billion people aged between 10 and 24 – the largest generation of young people in history – with close to 90 per cent living in countries with low- or middle-income economies.¹ This population group uses all the urban spaces freely available for physical activity, games and sport. When these facilities do exist, they are often overused and quickly fall into disrepair. On a broader scale, cities in emerging and developing countries are experiencing an average influx of five million people a year, with public authorities scrambling to keep up with this growing demand for urban infrastructure, and sports facilities in particular. The result is an increasing shortage of playing fields, stadiums, gymnasiums, and swimming pools. Too often, these sports facilities are designed as standalone urban structures which are not fully integrated into the surrounding city environment and only serve a single demographic. Women's sports, parasports, and intergenerational sports activities continue to be left on the sidelines. Worldwide, 46% of women report feeling unsafe in public sports facilities, and this figure rises to 65% for women in Africa. On top of these considerable challenges around inclusion, climate change is also having a major impact on the world of sport. Average global temperatures continue to rise and could increase by as much as 4°C. Consequently, in France, the amount of time spent on physical activity and sport is set to decrease by 66 days per year, an alarming statistic that is cause for concern around the world.

Despite these challenges, sport remains a powerful vehicle for social cohesion, public health, and inclusion, while promoting human development and social harmony. Sport is also a driver of economic growth², and even gradual expansion in this industry helps to create resilient spaces for communities, while opening up sustainable economic and educational opportunities, particularly in developing regions. Permanent access to physical activity and sports for all is a key factor for public health. According to estimates by the World Health Organization (WHO), between four and five million deaths per year could be averted if the global population was more physically active.

The availability and quality of sports facilities is therefore a key issue: this infrastructure forms the foundation for sport participation, and serves as a catalyst for positive change. Designing accessible, sustainable, inclusive, and resilient facilities provides many benefits for the people who use them for physical and sporting activities. As focal points in the community, sports facilities can revitalize urban areas, improve residents' living conditions and encourage them to engage with the community and social life of the neighborhood. If these facilities are designed and created for everyone, they can promote gender equality, encourage social and intergenerational diversity and foster social

cohesion. Nowadays, resilience to climate change should be taken into account from the preliminary design phase to ensure the durability of sports infrastructure, from site selection and landscaping to its various uses. The positive role of sport in climate change mitigation should also be recognized: for example, spaces for physical and sporting activities that are fully integrated into the natural environment and landscape can help create cool islands in cities.

One thing is certain: whatever the scale of the infrastructure³, this positive impact cannot be achieved without addressing issues around management, use, and programming, from the design phase, to ensure its sustainability, inclusiveness and suitability, which must then be monitored throughout the project's implementation. It was this idea that inspired the creation of this technical guide for sports infrastructure.

The aim of this guide is to provide operational staff and their internal and external counterparts with a documented reference framework to better understand and integrate the development of sports infrastructure into urban projects and public policy supported by AFD Group. Produced by the Urban Development, Planning, and Housing Division (VIL), it is designed for AFD Group project teams to support dialogue with project owners and partners, as well as any stakeholders with expertise or an interest in this field who would like to better understand the issues, challenges, and available solutions for financing and/or creating sustainable, resilient, and inclusive sports infrastructure.

The first part of this guide defines the different types of sports infrastructure, identifies the challenges associated with each type, and outlines appropriate legal, economic, and technical models for the sports facility in question.

The second part provides further food for thought, with a list of operational recommendations for incorporating gender equality, climate change, biodiversity, and citizen engagement issues into these projects. Practical tools are provided to maximize the impact of projects on the Sustainable Development Goals.

It also includes a brief practical guide for AFD Group members which sets out, step by step across the entire project cycle, questions, recommendations, and tools for teams to better manage the appraisal and financing phases of projects involving or focusing solely on the creation of sports facilities.

1 [Youth - Sustainable Development website](#) of the United Nations.

2 The sports industry now accounts for 0.5% of gross domestic product (GDP) in Africa, compared to 2% of global GDP, thus offering major potential for economic growth. Source: *Forbes Afrique*.

3 See the tool sheets on types of infrastructure: from local sports facilities for residents of a neighborhood to national stadiums and complexes for hosting major competitions.

Contents

Foreword	3
Contents	4
Introduction	5
Glossary	6

PART 1:

UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT OF SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE CHALLENGES INVOLVED 7

1.1. General definition and challenges 8

1.2. Types of sports infrastructure 9

National and international sports infrastructure	10
Youth Olympic Games – YOG Dakar	14
Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) 2024	16
Regional sports infrastructure	18
Local sports facilities	20
Regional Capitals program	24
Stormwater drainage project in Douala	26
Program to construct 5,000 local sports facilities	28
Sports facilities in schools and universities	30
ISONGA program	34
Sport and education	36
Sports facilities delivered by Urban Fabric Initiatives	38
Urban Fabric Initiative in Dakar	40
Active design: urban planning to promote physical activity in cities	42

1.3. Main technical challenges associated with sports infrastructure: from foundations to use 45

Key technical challenges: recommendations for each stage of construction	46
Focus point 1: Technical challenge – What type of surfacing should you choose for a multisports facility?	50
Focus point 2: Technical challenge – What type of turf should you choose for a football stadium?	52
PEUL III program	54

1.4. Operational and legal structuring key to sports infrastructure projects 56

Project structuring: Which operational, legal, and contractual model(s) should you choose?	57
Focus point 1: Project structuring – Public-private partnerships for sports infrastructure projects	62
Paris Olympic Aquatics Centre	66
Agora program	68
Focus point 2: Project structuring – Management model for Urban Fabric Initiatives	70
Urban Fabric Initiative in Tunis	72
PROVILLE program	74

PART 2:

SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE ALIGNED WITH THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS 77

Sport and gender equality: Incorporating gender issues into sports infrastructure projects	80
SPORCAP program	86
Sport and climate change: Developing resilient and low-carbon infrastructure	88
Sport and nature: Promoting climate action through sport	90
Sport and governance: Ensuring better governance of sports infrastructure	94
PAISD program	96
Youth, Culture and Sport	98

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide operational staff and their internal and external partners with a common methodological framework for projects involving the creation of suitable and sustainable sports infrastructure. It is designed as a reference guide based on existing data on sports facilities – from project structuring through to the commissioning of construction work – and is therefore a living document by definition.

Originally intended to help project managers identify and implement projects or components of projects involving sports infrastructure, it can also be used as to promote dialogue and raise awareness among project owners and partners about the challenges of financing and constructing sports infrastructure.

This guide is structured around three types of summary sheet: tool sheets, technical sheets, and case studies. These summary sheets constitute both standalone and complementary documents, providing the reader with essential technical information and examples of flagship projects to give them a better understanding of all types of sports projects. It therefore serves as a reference guide that can be delved into at any point: whether via the tool sheets to better understand the different types of infrastructure or learn more about the complex task of choosing the most appropriate contractual framework; via the technical sheets focused on incorporating climate or gender issues into a sports infrastructure project; or via the case studies that outline the potential challenges and provide a detailed presentation on each project.

TOOL SHEETS

Key principles and concepts for understanding the different types of sports infrastructure, methods of financing, the associated contractual frameworks, and the specific technical and operational challenges associated with each type of facility.

TECHNICAL SHEETS

Guidelines for implementing projects that accelerate the transition to sports infrastructure aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals: gender equality, biodiversity, climate change and governance.

CASE STUDIES

Presentation of inspiring urban development projects that incorporate or focus specifically on the construction of flagship sports facilities.

Glossary

AFD: Agence Française de Développement	MEAE: French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
ANCT: French National Agency for Territorial Cohesion	MISE: Major International Sporting Event
ANS: French National Sports Agency	NbS: Nature-Based Solution
ARRU: Urban Rehabilitation and Renewal Agency (Tunisia)	NGO: Non-Governmental Organization
AWPB: Annual Work Plan and Budget	OAC: Paris Olympic Aquatics Centre
BAP: Biodiversity Action Plan	OG: Olympic Games
BD: Bidding Documents	ONS: National Sports Office (Côte d'Ivoire)
BNETD: National Office for Technical Studies and Development (Côte d'Ivoire)	PAA: Participatory Area Assessment
BOQ: Bill of quantities	PAPMAS: Program to Support the Promotion of Grassroots Sports and Sport for All (Côte d'Ivoire)
C2D: Debt Reduction-Development Contract	PC: Primary Contractor
CAF: Confederation of African Football	PD: Preliminary Design
CEI: Call for Expressions of Interest	PE: Physical Education
CETUD: Executive Council for Sustainable Urban Transport (Senegal)	PEEB: Program for Energy Efficiency in Buildings
CSO: Civil Society Organization	PMC: Project Management Consultant
CUD: Urban Community of Douala	PNS: National Sport Policy (Côte d'Ivoire)
DB: Design and Build	PO: Project Owner
DBO: Design, Build and Operate	POG: Paris Olympic Games
DD: Detailed Design	PP: Procurement Plan
DPO: Delegated Project Owner	PPP: Public-Private Partnership
EF: Expertise France	PPS: Project Presentation Sheet – Note to AFD bodies
ESIA: Environmental and Social Impact Assessment	PRIQH: Program for the Rehabilitation and Integration of Residential Areas (Tunisia)
FAPS: Project Initiation, Preparation and Monitoring Facility	QPV: Priority Urban Neighborhood
FAPS-CLS: Project Initiation, Preparation and Monitoring Facility of the CLS Division	RAP: Resettlement Action Plan
FASEP: Private Sector Study and Aid Fund	SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals
FEF+: Team France Fund	UEFA: Union of European Football Associations
FIBA: International Basketball Federation	UFID: Urban Fabric Initiative in Dakar
FIFA: International Federation of Association Football	UFIO: Urban Fabric Initiative in Ouagadougou
FINA: International Swimming Federation	UFIT: Urban Fabric Initiative in Tunis
FTE: Full-Time Equivalent	UN: United Nations
GAP: Gender Action Plan	UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme
GBV: Gender-Based Violence	USPM: Urban and Social Project Management
GDP: Gross Domestic Product	VRD: Utilities and Access Roads
ITE: International Technical Expert	WHO: World Health Organization
IUCN: International Union for Conservation of Nature	YOG: Youth Olympic Games
LRP: Livelihood Restoration Plan	YOGOC: Youth Olympic Games Organizing Committee
MANCOM: Management Committee	

PART 1

.....

UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT
OF SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE
AND THE CHALLENGES INVOLVED



In everyday language, the term “sport” may be used to describe a regional athletics competition, a PE class, or even a bike ride. However, it is important to distinguish between the terms “sport” and “physical activity”. The Collins Dictionary defines sport as “an individual or group activity pursued for exercise or pleasure, often involving the testing of physical capabilities and taking the form of a competitive game.” Physical activity, on the other hand, is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as “any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure. Physical activity refers to all movement including during leisure time, for transport to get to and from places, or as part of a person’s work or domestic activities. Both moderate- and vigorous-intensity physical activity improve health.”

In both cases, these activities are performed in the same types of places. A sports facility is therefore defined as any place, geographical area, structure, or equipment that people can use to participate in sport or physical activity. Three types of sports facilities can be identified:

- **Purpose-built sports facilities** including any building, structure or facility designed for sport, whether public or private. In these facilities, primarily located in urban areas, people can take part in physical activity or sports, whether indoors or outdoors, in a public or private space, which could be in a school or even on prison grounds. Examples include a multisports complex, stadium, or swimming pool.
- **Outdoor sports spaces** including any urban facility or landscaped area, whether public or private. People can engage in physical activity or sports both indoors and outdoors, and in urban or rural environments. An urban park, cycle path, outdoor fitness trail, or even a skatepark can all be defined as developed spaces.
- Lastly, **the natural environment** serves as a space for physical activity and sport, regardless of whether it has been developed to protect biodiversity. Practiced outdoors, this type of sport or physical activity mainly takes place in rural areas, but these activities can also be integrated into urban areas. For example, forests, mountains, lakes, and coastlines are ideal natural environments for practicing sport.

Natural environments, which are freely accessible and offer rich diversity, help motivate and encourage people to take part in physical activity and sports without the need for specialist infrastructure: the environment itself serves as the playing field. While protecting these natural environments is paramount, these challenges will not be addressed in this guide.

The guide will focus on urban development, whether through purpose-built sports facilities and their surroundings or spaces developed for sport, particularly when associated with the concept of active design, which will be covered in more detail later. Therefore, this guide will primarily refer to “sports infrastructure” or “sports facilities.”

As stated in the introduction, the construction of sports infrastructure presents many challenges. Amid the critical shortage of these facilities in urban areas of the countries where AFD Group operates, there is a need for co-development of sports infrastructure projects, to ensure they are fit-for-purpose. This means creating facilities that meet the needs of end-users; that make physical activity and sports inclusive for women and people of all ages; that apply a sustainable financial, management and operating model; that are suited to specific weather conditions which are being exacerbated by climate change; and finally, that are aligned with local public policy and the capacities of public authorities in the field of sport.

Section 1.2 outlines the various types of sports facilities identified and financed by AFD Group, providing specific information on their characteristics (target users, sports activities, size, cost, operating model, etc.). Section 1.3 lists the main technical challenges common to all infrastructure and associated with the design and construction phases. Lastly, section 1.4 explores the existing options for project structuring and then focuses in more detail on a few specific use cases.

1.2 Types of sports infrastructure

Physical and sporting activities are practiced in spaces of varying sizes, ranging from neighborhood playing fields to regional, national, or international stadiums, as well as facilities in schools and public spaces designed to promote physical activity. This guide has identified five main categories of scale to define the facilities where these activities take place:

- **International/national infrastructure** refers to large-scale facilities designed to host national or international competitions (such as national or world championships or the Olympic Games.). These complex structures may also be used for other cultural, commercial, or recreational activities unrelated to the sports sector.
- **Regional infrastructure** is designed to host sports competitions and events involving athletes and spectators from one or more neighboring regions.
- **Local sports facilities** are defined in particular by their accessibility to the residents of a neighborhood, town, or city. These facilities are often used by local organizations and clubs for regular activities, which may or may not involve competitions.

► **Sports facilities in schools and universities** are designed for educational institutions (elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and universities). They are used both to teach physical education and to support students training for a professional career in elite sports, alongside their academic studies.

► **Active design** is an urban planning approach to public spaces that aims to encourage active mobility and daily physical exercise, particularly among people least likely to participate in sports. It often involves making minor but strategic changes that promote accessibility, mixed-use spaces and the repurposing of existing built heritage, with minimal development work.

In line with its mandate, AFD Group prioritizes financing for urban development programs to create local sports facilities as well as infrastructure in schools and universities. Since 2019, the Group has also been supporting legacy planning strategies following major international sporting events, and particularly the design and build of infrastructure that will continue to be used long after such events.

Degree of urban development required for the sports facility	Scale	Examples of sports facilities
Building and development of infrastructure	International/national	Arenas > 8,000 seats, stadiums > 30,000 seats, Olympic-size swimming pools, national performance centers, professional sports centers
	Regional	Arenas < 8,000 seats, stadiums < 30,000 seats, swimming pools
	Local	Gyms, multi-purpose sports stadiums, urban stadiums, street workout areas
	Schools and universities	Sports fields, gymnasiums, multi-use games areas, swimming pools, parks, and green spaces belonging to schools
Development of spaces	Active design	Urban equipment designed to promote sports, local sports facilities incorporated into the wider urban landscape (street workout areas, pump tracks)
Natural environment		Urban parks, forests, lakes, etc.

THE TOOL SHEETS provided in the following section will explore the concepts, characteristics, specific features, business/management models, and the overall costs associated with these five types of infrastructure.

National and international sports infrastructure



WHAT IS INTERNATIONAL OR NATIONAL SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE?

International or national sports infrastructure refers to **large-scale sports facilities**, located in the center or on the outskirts of a country's political or economic capital, or in major secondary cities (national scale). Ideally, these facilities **will be located near to public transport links and accessible via major roads and highways**. These **multi-functional** facilities are designed to host a range of major international sporting events (MISE) or national sporting events (Olympic Games, World Cup, championships) as well as important cultural events (concerts, live performances and other events). In many geographical regions, this type of infrastructure is non-existent or limited to a single venue per country. Where these facilities do exist, their continued operation can be challenging for public authorities, as maintenance costs are often very high.

CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERNATIONAL OR NATIONAL SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE

Geographical scope: city/country. This type of facility is designed to host events for athletes and visitors from across the country or abroad.

Accessibility: these facilities can be accessed by public transport (as a priority) and/or by road. Admission is regulated.

Programming: the facility's size, layout, and equipment must comply with the standards set by international sports federations (International Swimming Federation – FINA, International Federation of Association Football – FIFA, International Basketball Federation – FIBA, etc.).

Uses: These multisports facilities accommodate all of the most popular sporting disciplines and activities (football, handball, volleyball, basketball, swimming, water polo, diving, athletics, tennis and badminton, etc.). They are primarily designed to host elite athletes, national federations and clubs. In Europe, almost all of these facilities are now truly modular in design, with all or part of the space being used for sports, cultural, or commercial activities aimed at the general public, amateur clubs, or businesses. All over the world, these facilities are also used to host major cultural events (concerts, festivals, etc.)

Examples of these facilities: stadiums with a capacity of at least 10,000 to 15,000 seats, arenas with a capacity of at least 5,000 to 8,000 seats, aquatics centers with Olympic or semi-Olympic swimming pools, national performance centers and national training centers.



DID YOU KNOW?

The International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) has published a set of guidelines to ensure the quality of a football stadium of international or national renown over the long term, including:

- ▶ a pitch of 105 meters long and 68 meters wide;
- ▶ a minimum capacity of 20,000 seats;
- ▶ a roof that partially or fully covers the stands;
- ▶ a control room with CCTV system to ensure user safety;
- ▶ a doping control room;
- ▶ well-maintained, high-quality natural or hybrid turf.

WHAT BUSINESS MODEL AND MANAGEMENT MODEL ARE REQUIRED?

Project Owner (PO): Projects to construct or redevelop national/international sports infrastructure are **mainly managed by a government** (typically via the Ministry of Sports).

Cost: Construction of this type of infrastructure is primarily financed via public funding but investment from the private sector is becoming increasingly common, particularly through public-private partnerships in order to spread the financial risks. While public funding may also be required to cover operating and maintenance costs, revenue from match ticket sales, sponsorship, and related economic activities, such as food sales, goods and services of all kinds, are all potential revenue streams that help ensure the long-term viability of the facility's business model. "Hospitality" seating (i.e. with extra services) such as VIP boxes, primarily for corporate customers, or those offering additional VIP services with personalized services, priority seating, catering, etc., for a more affluent clientele can provide major revenue streams for the managers of such infrastructure. This model must include a differentiated pricing strategy that offers affordable tickets to the general public.

Operating and maintenance models: various operating and maintenance models are applicable: (i) management by the government or the city authority where the facility is located, (ii) management delegated to a third party through a concession or lease contract, or through a simple maintenance contract, such as a public-private partnership, or (iii) management by one or more members of the consortium selected at the start of the project for the design, build, and operation of the facility, i.e. a public-private partnership.



FIND OUT MORE:

- [Tool Sheet – Project Structuring](#)
- [Tool Sheet – Focus Point 1: Project Structuring - PPPs](#)
- [Tool Sheet – Focus Point 2: Project Structuring - Urban Fabric Initiatives](#)

SOME EXAMPLES OF COSTS

STADIUM WITH AROUND 30,000 SEATS:

Construction: €60-250 million (costs can vary widely)

Design: 10 to 15% of the construction cost

Operation and maintenance: €1-5 million

> Ratio of capital to annual operating costs: 1.3 to 1.6%

OLYMPIC SWIMMING POOL :

Construction: €30 to 60 million

Design: at least 15% of the construction cost

Operation and maintenance: €500,000-€1.5 million

> Ratio of capital to annual operating costs: 1.3 to 2.5%



POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

Environmental and social risks

A large landholding may pose the risk of displacing local communities during the building's construction and/or destroying biodiversity in the surrounding area.

Operating and maintenance costs may be extremely high (see box with examples of costs above).

The environmental impact must not be underestimated: due to the large scale of this type of sports facility, and the vast number of visitors, energy, water, and electricity consumption, as well as the waste generated, can be extremely high. These factors must be taken into account from the construction phase.

Entry prices for events may exclude the most disadvantaged populations.

The facility must be integrated into the surrounding area offering good public transport links for easy access.

LEGACY PLANNING AN INTEGRAL PART OF AFD GROUP'S ROLE

For infrastructure projects associated with major international sporting events (MISE), one of the key challenges when designing these facilities is **legacy planning**. These facilities must be designed to incorporate the phases following the MISE, while meeting future requirements that often go beyond their use during the sports event. Applying this principle prevents this energy-intensive and complex infrastructure from becoming a "white elephant" and ensures its continued use after the event. Modularity must be taken into account from the design phase, **and any technical or architectural elements that could prevent the hosting of other events must be avoided**. With arenas, this applies in particular to the maximum ceiling height, which can be a decisive factor for certain sports (climbing, volleyball and gymnastics), as well as the structural strength and load-bearing capacity of the roof, in order to accommodate equipment and host concerts. Another key objective for the future operator is being able to **quickly and easily adapt the site for various cultural and sporting events**, so that they can be hosted in quick succession and the facility remains profitable.

An assessment of all potential uses should therefore be carried out, in line with demand, from the feasibility phase to **propose a comprehensive business model that ensures the long-term success of the facility, tailored to the PO's requirements, and upon which the design will be based**. As with the Olympic Aquatics Centre (OAC), built for the 2024 Paris Olympics, a review should be carried out to assess the potential for reducing spectator capacity after the specific major international sporting event (MISE) during the design phase.

POSITIVE IMPACT

The main impact of this type of infrastructure is to raise the profile of sport on a national and potentially global scale, and to broaden the country's influence in sports diplomacy.

The facility may also boost the economic attractiveness of the area (tourism, hotel sector, creation of offices or shopping centers). The region can then host major sporting or cultural events that attract visitors from far and wide. However, close attention must be paid to the size of the catchment area, as well as its specific needs and market, so that the infrastructure integrates seamlessly into the urban fabric and generates synergistic economic benefits.



FIND OUT MORE:

- [Case Study – Youth Olympic Games \(Dakar\)](#)
- [Case Study – Africa Cup of Nations \(Côte d'Ivoire\)](#)
- [Case Study – Paris Olympic Aquatics Centre \(France\)](#)



DEFINITIONS :

Arena : indoor sports/cultural venue.

White Elephant: this term describes a prestigious, large-scale facility whose operating or maintenance costs become an unsustainable financial burden.

The expression comes from an ancient tradition in Southeast Asia where the rare and sacred white elephant was given as a gift. However, the animal's upkeep was so expensive that the "gift" quickly became a drain on the person's finances.

CASE STUDY

SENEGAL

Youth Olympic Games - YOG
Dakar



Type of infrastructure



BENEFICIARY: Senegalese government

PROJECT OWNER:
Central: Ministry of Infrastructure
Delegated project owner: Ageroute

FINANCING MECHANISM:
3 sovereign loans from AFD Group

AMOUNT: €80 million in total
(€45 M + €15 M + €20 M)

AFD DIVISION: Urban Development, Planning, and Housing (with support from the Social Link division)

PROJECT TIMELINE



BACKGROUND

Senegal's population has experienced rapid growth, increasing from 3 million to 16 million between 1960 and 2021, while the city of Dakar's population grew from 300,000 to 3.5 million over the same period. Today, 51.8% of the people living in Dakar are under 20 years old. Sport is widely practiced and deeply embedded in the region's culture, however, there is a shortage of public space for recreational sports. The city's existing infrastructure, like the Iba Mar Diop Stadium and the Olympic swimming pool, is aging and falling into disrepair due to a lack of funds for maintenance. Despite this situation, Senegal was selected to host the 2026 Youth Olympic Games (YOG), thus becoming the first African country to organize an Olympic event.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this project is to promote young people's participation in sport through the 2026 Youth Olympic Games and to significantly improve the country's existing public sports facilities. This project is focused on several key areas:

- Increasing the number of major public sports facilities by renovating the Olympic swimming pool and the Iba Mar Diop stadium;
- Developing local sports facilities on 11 sites to reduce inequalities in access to sports;
- Ensuring the long-term viability of the management and maintenance models for this sports infrastructure, whether Olympic or local facilities;
- Promoting gender equality across the entire project and encouraging girls' participation in sports by designing and managing facilities that take into account gender-related issues.



ORGANIZATION

Landowner	State ownership (Government, local authorities)
Type of facility	• Facilities that meet international standards: athletics stadium, Olympic swimming pool • Local sports facilities
Structuring of the study phase	Feasibility studies: Franco-Tunisian consortium of engineering consulting firms (SETEC/SCET)
Structuring of the construction phase	Construction contracts: • Chinese consortium (CCECC) for the Iba Mar Diop stadium • French consortium (SOGEA-SATOM) for the Olympic swimming pool project (proposed arrangement)
Structuring of the operational phase	• For the duration of the Dakar YOG, the YOGOC will be responsible for the programming of events across the sites (temporary infrastructure) and for the organization of the games as a whole. • After the Dakar YOG, the structuring of the operating and maintenance phases will be defined by the Project Management Consultant (PMC). The objective is to establish a balanced business model that not only meets the access requirements of the general public, schools, and universities, but also generates additional revenue to supplement public funding.
Cost per facility	• Iba Mar Diop stadium: construction cost: €36 M • Olympic swimming pool: construction cost: €23 M • Local sports facilities: estimated construction cost: €9 M (€500,000 to €1 M per project)

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Construction and renovation of infrastructure: the success of an event like the Youth Olympic Games in Senegal is primarily judged on the legacy left behind for the host population. The preparation for and hosting of this major international sporting event must promote sport participation over the long term. This goal can only be achieved by creating infrastructure that is suitable and accessible to users, whether for independent use, or supervised activities run by sports clubs or schools. By renovating competitive sports facilities and constructing local facilities, sports can be made accessible to the entire Senegalese population.

Training and professional development: organizing an event like the Youth Olympic Games provides an opportunity to train and develop the professional skills of a large number of people. This applies to professions related to the infrastructure itself (construction, maintenance and use) as well as those associated with the organization of major international sporting events (YOGOC, volunteers and service providers). This need for skilled labor presents an opportunity to build a talent pool of future professionals who will support the country's development, not only in the fields of sports and events, but also in other sectors, including major public sports infrastructure.

Inclusion: Inclusion is an integral part of the project, both in terms of infrastructure design and the event's organization. All the infrastructure being built is accessible to people with disabilities. Gender equality has also been taken into account across the board, in accordance with the specific requirements of AFD Group, which has called for the development and implementation of a dedicated gender action plan. This means taking into account inclusion issues not only in the design of the infrastructure and facilities, but also through a long-term operational strategy, with accessibility policies for all types of users, affordable pricing, and incentives to get everyone involved in sport.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Best practices:

- ▶ **Incorporation of gender issues** from the feasibility phase, with a study commissioned by AFD Group to ensure that the infrastructure is inclusive and accessible to all.
- ▶ **Implementation of a Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) and a Livelihood Restoration Plan (LRP) led directly by the delegated project owner (DPO), with support from the urban and social project manager (USPM),** to support those impacted by the project (primarily local artisans), from the design phase through to the hosting of the Games and the legacy phase.
- ▶ **Incorporation of an assessment and recommendation process for the management and operation of all financed sports facilities** to guide and support public authorities in making decisions that ensure this infrastructure is inclusive and sustainable over the long term.

Recommendations :

- ▶ **Better plan the business model for maintaining and operating this infrastructure** by ensuring these factors are considered from the design phase and making the best possible operational decisions.
- ▶ **Consider allocating specific budgets for the operation and maintenance of infrastructure** (at least during the transition and full completion phases between the end of construction and commissioning) to prevent the rapid deterioration of these facilities.
- ▶ **Ensure that technical decisions are aligned with sustainability goals and cost control targets,** by prioritizing local employment and production while optimizing quality and maintenance.

CASE STUDY

CÔTE D'IVOIRE
2024 Africa Cup of Nations
(AFCON)



Félix Houphouët Boigny Stadium © BY SA

BACKGROUND

In September 2014, Côte d'Ivoire was named as the host country for the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) by the Confederation of African Football (CAF). After being postponed several times, the event was eventually held in January 2024.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

To meet CAF's contractual requirements for hosting this tournament, Côte d'Ivoire had to build or renovate six stadiums with capacities ranging from 20,000 to 60,000 seats. This investment went beyond sports infrastructure: hosting AFCON also prompted the development of other infrastructure projects, such as the construction of roads and highways, the creation of training fields – particularly in schools – as well as investment in hotels and hospitals, among other initiatives.

ORGANIZATION

Landowner	- Government of Côte d'Ivoire - Municipalities
Project Owner (PO)	- Government of Côte d'Ivoire and project ownership delegated to BNETD for five stadiums - Chinese government for the Olympic Stadium of Ebimpé (a "gift" from China)
Type of facility	Facilities that meet international standards: football, athletics
Structuring of the design, construction and financing phases	Design, build and finance contract for each stadium <i>These consolidated contracts systematically include a provision for the financing mechanism (bank loan identified by the consortium and repaid directly by the Ivorian government)</i>
Structuring of the operational phase	Currently managed by the Ivorian government through maintenance contracts. The operating model must be finalized by 2026 (plans for a public-private model)
Cost per stadium	Ebimpé – Alassane-Ouattara stadium: 60,000 seats/€250 million/Construction Abidjan – Félix Houphouët-Boigny Stadium: 30,000 seats/€99 million/Renovation Bouaké – Stade de la Paix: 40,000 seats/€82 million/Renovation Korhogo – Amadou Gon Coulibaly Stadium: 20,000 seats/€76 million/Construction San-Pédro – Laurent Pokou Stadium: 20,000 seats/€63 million/Construction Yamoussoukro – Charles Konan Banny Stadium: 20,000 seats/€72 million/Construction

Type of infrastructure

I/N	R	L	D
-----	---	---	---

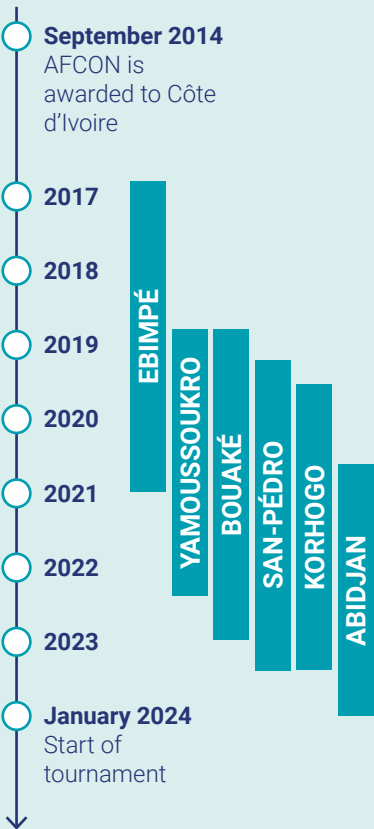
BENEFICIARY: Government of Côte d'Ivoire/COCAN

PROJECT OWNER: Government of Côte d'Ivoire

OPERATOR: Government of Côte d'Ivoire

FINANCING MECHANISM:
Government of Côte d'Ivoire
Olympic Stadium of Ebimpé:
Chinese government

PROJECT TIMELINE



© BNETD Côte d'Ivoire

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Hosting this tournament was an opportunity for Côte d'Ivoire to build **stadiums that meet international standards**: four new stadiums were constructed and two major renovations were carried out (Félix Houphouët-Boigny in Abidjan and Stade de la Paix in Bouaké). Each stadium is designed to accommodate football, rugby, and athletics competitions. In accordance with the program's requirements, these facilities are equipped with all the necessary safety systems, parking spaces, access for people in wheelchairs, as well as areas reserved for the stadium's various users (medical teams, referees, press, technical staff, storage areas, VIP boxes, etc.).

In accordance with the specifications set by the Confederation of African Football, twenty-four training fields have been constructed or renovated, primarily in schools, which **will continue to benefit from their use as part of the event's legacy**.

Organizing this type of tournament also requires **additional infrastructure and real estate to be built**: including roads, highways and hotels, as well as investment in hospitals.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Best practices:

- ▶ **Stadiums that comply with international standards:** the stadiums built for the Africa Cup of Nations meet the criteria set by the Confederation of African Football, and can therefore host other major international sporting events (MISE).
- ▶ **Study on post-tournament use:** the National Office for Technical Studies and Development (BNETD) conducted a study to determine the best management and maintenance strategy for the stadiums after the tournament.
- ▶ **Promotion of multifunctional use of stadiums:** the government focused on multi-use stadiums to ensure their profitability and continued operation (sports, live performances and commercial events).
- ▶ **Added value of training fields in schools:** the fields that have been rehabilitated in schools for the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) are a major asset for school sports, helping to establish and foster a true sporting culture.



Stade Felix Houphouet Boigny © BY SA

Recommendations :

- ▶ **Define a post-tournament operating strategy:** from the design phase, develop a strategy for the management, maintenance, and operation of stadiums after the tournament.
- ▶ **Secure long-term public and private funding:** establish partnerships with the private sector to ensure facilities are maintained over the long-term and identify specific solutions for each stadium (such as patronage or sponsorship).
- ▶ **Make stadiums as accessible as possible:** upgrade transport networks and urban transport links to stadiums, particularly for those located outside of city centers, to facilitate access.
- ▶ **Incorporate stadiums into the national sports policy:** develop a strategy to include these facilities in a sports development plan that promotes accessibility for all, while taking into account their high management costs. Invest in the construction of new sports fields that are more equally distributed across the country.
- ▶ **Ensure the long-term viability of training fields:** allocate a maintenance budget for these fields (which will be affected by technical decisions such as choosing natural or hybrid turf) to guarantee their long-term use.

Regional sports infrastructure

WHAT IS REGIONAL SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE?

Regional sports infrastructure refers to sports facilities located in the center or on the outskirts of a regional capital city or within a district of the capital. Ideally, this infrastructure will be situated close to public transport links and in a residential area. These facilities are designed to host regional and national sports competitions, cultural events, and sports activities organized by federations and clubs, including those at elite level. In many geographical areas, this type of facility is often underdeveloped, due to the high costs of routine maintenance.

CHARACTERISTICS OF REGIONAL SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE

Geographical scope: municipality/city/region. This type of facility is used to host events for athletes and visitors from across the region or from nearby regions/municipalities.

Accessibility: these facilities are primarily accessed via public transport and/or by road. Admission is regulated.

Programming: the facility's dimensions must comply with the standards of national sports federations, and may also meet the standards of international sports federations, although this requirement is optional.

Uses: as with national and international sports infrastructure, this type of multisports facility can accommodate all the most popular sports (football, handball, volleyball, basketball, swimming, water polo, athletics, tennis and badminton, etc.). These facilities are designed for athletes as well as sports clubs and the general public.

Examples of these facilities: stadiums with varying capacity of up to around 10,000 seats, or arenas with a capacity of fewer than 5,000 seats, simple aquatic centers (25- or 50-meter pools), performance centers and training centers.



FIND OUT MORE:

- [Case Study – YOG Dakar](#)
- [Case Study – Paris Olympic Aquatics Centre](#)

WHAT BUSINESS MODEL AND MANAGEMENT MODEL ARE REQUIRED?

Project Owner: A project to build or renovate a regional sports facility may be managed by the government or the relevant local authority.

Cost: The financing model is primarily based on public subsidies but private investors may sometimes be involved (mainly during the operating and maintenance phases). The cost of building regional sports infrastructure varies depending on the size and type of facility. Operating and maintenance costs also vary depending on the facility's capacity, but are proportionally higher than those for national or international infrastructure. However, as regional facilities are used more frequently than large-scale infrastructure, they offer greater potential for developing a sustainable and balanced business model. Revenue can be generated from ticket sales, sponsorship, and fees set by federations and clubs for participation in sports. To ensure that sporting events and sports activities are accessible, an appropriate management and operating model with a suitable activity program must be established. Differentiated pricing based on the type of audience, for events as well as sports (memberships for federations in particular), helps promote access for all types of users.

Operating and maintenance models: various maintenance and operating models are applicable: (i) management by the government or local authority, (ii) management delegated to a third party through a concession or lease contract, or through a simple service contract (i.e. public-private partnership) or, less commonly than for national and international infrastructure, (iii) management by one or more members of the consortium selected at the start of the project to design, build, and operate the facility (such as. public-private partnership).



FIND OUT MORE:

- [Tool Sheet – Project Structuring](#)
- [Tool Sheet – Focus Point 1: Project Structuring - PPPs](#)
- [Tool Sheet – Focus Point 2: Project Structuring - Urban Fabric Initiatives](#)

SOME EXAMPLES OF COSTS

STADIUM WITH AROUND 10,000 SEATS:

Construction: €20-40 million (costs can vary widely)

Design: 10 to 15% of the construction cost

Operation and maintenance: €1-2 million

> **Ratio of capital to annual operating costs:** 5 to 7.5%

REGIONAL SWIMMING POOL:

Construction: €7-20 million

Design: at least 15% of the construction cost

Operation and maintenance: €250,000 to €600,000

> **Ratio of capital to annual operating costs:** 3.5 to 4.5%

POSITIVE IMPACT

Generally located in intermediate cities, **the main purpose of this type of infrastructure is to facilitate access to regional sports and cultural events** for certain groups that cannot travel to the nation's capital or a nearby major city. Another positive impact is **that sports clubs and federations can use these facilities to organize and host activities over the long term.** Essential for promoting sport participation at both the regional and neighborhood level, these facilities are well-equipped and thus offer a wide range of high-quality sporting activities.



Local sports facilities



WHAT IS A LOCAL SPORTS FACILITY?

A **local sports facility** refers to sports facilities and amenities located close to where residents live, often situated in urban areas on the outskirts of residential neighborhoods or near schools. These facilities are designed to be easily accessible to the general public and to encourage regular participation in physical activity and sports. In many geographical areas, this type of local facility is often the least well-developed. Where these facilities do exist, they are typically overused and rapidly fall into disrepair, an issue often exacerbated by a lack of regular maintenance.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A LOCAL SPORTS FACILITY

Geographical scope: neighborhood, municipality or district. This type of facility is used by local residents in the neighborhood, municipality, or city, as well as sports associations.

Accessibility: these facilities are located within a reasonable distance of residential housing or work places, and can generally be accessed on foot or by bike, facilitating access for people of all ages and all fitness levels. Entry may be free or regulated.

Programming: there are no standard dimensions, so this type of facility is designed in accordance with available resources and local needs. Ideally, the size of the facility will be determined based on an area sports assessment (analysis of supply and demand for specific sports disciplines and facilities in the area) and on architectural planning in accordance with the available land, the type of facility, user traffic, and any additional amenities required (restrooms, changing rooms, bleachers, lighting, ball-stop nets, site boundary markers, etc.). The facility's potential uses must be taken into consideration in the planning phase, based on both the area sports assessment of supply and demand, and the management, operation, and programming models specific to the project. The maximum capacity of bleachers or grandstands for this type of facility must not exceed 3,000 seats.

Uses: local sports facilities are designed to accommodate the main ball sports (football, basketball, handball, volleyball, tennis, etc.), swimming, and urban sports (five-a-side football, paddle tennis, fitness workouts, fitness trails, skateparks, etc.). Designed for use by for amateurs and local sports associations, these facilities may also include children's play areas or social spaces (such as a gazebo, picnic area, or snack bar).

Examples of these facilities: outdoor playing fields, multisports facilities, gymnasiums, athletics tracks, municipal swimming pools, skateparks, fitness trails, outdoor fitness/workout areas, children's playgrounds, etc.



FOCUS

Specific features and essential extras for local sports facilities

In order to promote individual participation in sports tailored to different fitness levels, and create facilities that are easy to maintain:

- ▶ prioritize quality facilities that are durable and easy to maintain;
- ▶ focus on multi-purpose sports facilities with accessible, modular, and versatile equipment;
- ▶ make sure that the site is secure and well-lit;
- ▶ consider putting a roof over certain equipment to encourage participation in all weathers (like hot sun or rain).

WHAT BUSINESS MODEL AND MANAGEMENT MODEL ARE REQUIRED?

PO: projects to build or renovate local sports facilities are often managed by the local authority (Local public PO).

Cost: The financing model for constructing this type of infrastructure is generally dependent on public subsidies. The cost of building a local sports facility varies greatly depending on the sports equipment and amenities involved, as well as the earthwork, drainage, and sanitation work required. Although the operating and maintenance costs for this type of facility are lower than for regional or national infrastructure, it is still a major challenge to establish a management/operating model that offers the greatest possible availability and access for local residents and athletes, regardless of the type of activity or level (individuals, occasional users, sessions organized by a sports club or federation, group or individual sports classes, etc.). Providing the broadest possible access requires a sustainable business model and a fee structure tailored to each audience and their means. Free access could be offered to schoolchildren, retirees, seniors, people with disabilities, etc., while membership plans and fees will need to be evaluated for sports federations, paid sports classes, etc. The overall business model established (including with public funding) must therefore cover the financing of maintenance and ongoing use. While less commonplace, private financing may also be a potential option from the investment phase (for example, the NBA or Orange in West Africa).

Operating and maintenance models: (i) direct public management by the local authority/municipality, with a dedicated budget and staff), (ii) management delegated to a third party through a concession or lease contract, with payment of a fee to the local authority which retains ownership of the land, (iii) establishment of a management committee with a contract/pledge of commitment, signed with the local authority that owns the site.



FIND OUT MORE:

- [Tool Sheet – Business Models: What contractual structure should you choose?](#)

SOME EXAMPLES OF COSTS

MULTISPORTS FACILITY:

Construction: €100,000 to €550,000

Design: 10 to 15% of the construction cost

Operation and maintenance (annual): €10,000 to €20,000

> Ratio of capital to annual operating costs: 4 to 7.5%

MUNICIPAL SWIMMING POOL:

Construction: €1.5-4 million

Design: at least 15% of the construction cost

Operation and maintenance: €100,000 to €400,000

> Ratio of capital to annual operating costs: 10 to 20%

GYMNASIUM:

Construction: €800,000 to €1.5 million

Design: 10 to 15% of the construction cost

Operation and maintenance (annual): €40,000 to €100,000

> Ratio of capital to annual operating costs: 5 to 10%



POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

Environmental and social risks

Acquisition of the **landholding** may risk displacing local communities during construction of the building and/or destroying biodiversity in the surrounding area.

Operating and maintenance costs may be high.

The environmental impact must not be underestimated: depending on the size of the sports facility and the number of visitors, energy, water, and electricity consumption, as well as the waste generated, may be substantial. These factors must be taken into account from the construction phase.

Entry prices for events may exclude the most disadvantaged populations.

The facility must be integrated into the surrounding area offering good public transport links for easy access.

IMPACT

Diverse range of users: the facility should accommodate sports training, physical activity for schoolchildren, and other public events (community, municipal, and local events, etc.).

Promotion of public health and well-being: the main objective of these facilities is to make sports and physical activity accessible to as many people as possible, particularly women and girls, and to promote the health and well-being of local residents by encouraging regular physical activity.

Spaces for social interaction and community life: these facilities are about more than sport, they also provide opportunities for active and recreational leisure activities. They are social spaces that promote social cohesion and community life by providing a place for local residents to meet, socialize, and take part in activities together. These local sports facilities can help shape neighborhoods, thus enhancing the area's attractiveness and expanding its service offering.

 FOCUS**Local sports facilities and intermediate cities**

Intermediate cities are seeing particularly high population growth. These demographic trends in urban areas are creating strong public demand for sports facilities. However, there is a major shortage of this infrastructure in cities.

To address this, local sports facilities can be incorporated into broader investment projects to develop urban infrastructure and services in an intermediate city, or even into investment programs covering multiple cities. The challenge is therefore to include, during the planning phase of these urban projects, the development of accessible local sports facilities that can be integrated into public spaces, based on sustainable management and programming models.

 POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION**Design and management of local sports facilities**

Identify existing and emerging sports activities (including those for women and people with reduced mobility or disabilities), and assess community needs through consultation mechanisms.

Identify local objectives and develop a master plan for sports infrastructure to ensure overall consistency in the area's offering.

Identify the site and confirm availability (secure the land rights, identify existing uses on the site and analyze the potential environmental impact on biodiversity in the surrounding area, etc.).

Approach the construction/renovation of a local sports facility as a comprehensive development project: plan for sports facilities and related amenities (such as restrooms, changing rooms, bleachers, kiosks, lighting, ball-stop nets, site boundary markers, etc.), taking into account traffic within and around the site and considering how the site will fit in with its surroundings (accessibility, public transport links, schools, green spaces, connection with the neighborhood, etc.).

Define appropriate management, operating and maintenance models during the planning phase for sports infrastructure. Assess the potential involvement of local associations and residents in the use of the facilities and their maintenance, thereby limiting the risk of deterioration.

If possible, set aside funds from the project budget to train the managers and staff of these facilities (equipment maintenance and use, awareness of gender and inclusion issues, and implementation of a management and operating model that promotes a wide range of uses and activities).

 FIND OUT MORE:

- [Case Study – SPORCAP Program, Cameroon](#)
- [Case Study – Regional Capitals Program, Cameroon](#)
- [Case Study – Stormwater Drainage Project in Douala, Cameroon](#)
- [Case Study – PROVILLE Program, Tunisia](#)
- [Case Study – Urban Fabric Initiative in Tunis, Tunisia](#)

CASE STUDY

CAMEROON

Regional Capitals Program



Bertoua Site – CR2 Project
© Regional Capitals Local Monitoring Unit

BACKGROUND

In 2010, Cameroon's population stood at around 20 million, with half of people living in urban areas. The urban population is growing rapidly at an annual rate of 4%, significantly higher than the overall population growth rate of 2%. This trend is most evident in regional capitals, where demand for urban infrastructure and services is increasing at a rapid pace.

However, the country's lack of infrastructure, exacerbated by the slow pace of investment, has led to the deterioration of living conditions in urban areas and hampered its economic development.

To address this situation, the Regional Capitals program (CR1) was developed, in line with the decentralization process initiated in Cameroon in the 1990s. The CR1 program is focused on three of the country's ten regional capitals – Bertoua, Bafoussam, and Garoua – by directing financing to strategic investments aimed at stimulating urban development. Implemented under a Debt Reduction-Development Contract (C2D), this program promotes an overarching approach to urban development. Although sport only makes up a small component of this program, it has been incorporated into urban regeneration efforts. The Regional Capitals 2 (CR2) program is the logical next step of CR1 and has been expanded to include the regional capitals of Bamenda and Maroua.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

► CR1 - Renovation/construction of sports infrastructure:

Bertoua: A basketball court and a volleyball court were built. Construction work started in 2019 and was completed in 2024. This sports infrastructure was built in Sembe Lecco Park, which was also created as part of CR1.

Garoua: Two multisports facilities, designed for handball, basketball, volleyball, and tennis, and incorporating a gym, were built. Construction work began in 2020 and was finished in 2023. These facilities are located within the wooded park (Parc Boisé), created as part of CR1.

Bafoussam: No plans to create sports facilities were included in CR1.

► CR2 - Renovation/construction of sports infrastructure:

Bamenda: Four multisports facilities, designed for handball, volleyball, basketball, and tennis, were built. Construction work started in 2019 and project handover was completed on a staggered basis between 2021 and 2023.

Maroua: Three multisports facilities, designed for handball, volleyball, basketball, and tennis, are currently under construction. Construction work started in 2021 and is scheduled for completion in 2026.

Type of infrastructure

I/N	R	L	D
-----	---	---	---

BENEFICIARY: Government of Cameroon

PROJECT OWNER:

Central: Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (MINHDU)

Local: Urban communities

OPERATOR: Municipalities or leaseholders

FINANCING MECHANISM: Debt Reduction-Development Contract (C2D)

AMOUNT:

CR1: €25 M

CR2: €30 M

AFD DIVISION: Urban Development, Planning, and Housing

PROJECT TIMELINE

CR1 et CR2



Bamenda Site - CR2 Project
© Regional Capitals Local Monitoring Unit

ORGANIZATION

	Regional Capitals 1 (CR1)	Regional Capitals 2 (CR2)
Landowner	Foncier communal	
Project Owner (PO)	• Program PO: MINH DU (Central Project Management Unit – PMU) • Local PO: urban communities for the aspects that directly affect them (Local PMU)	• Program PO: MINH DU (Central PMU) • Local PO: urban communities for contracts of less than €153,000 (Local PMU)
Structuring of the study phase	Feasibility study: French-Cameroonian consortium (URBAPLAN/URBACONSULTING/ERA-CAMEROUN)	Feasibility study: French consortium (LOUIS BERGER-URBAPLAN) Design studies: conducted internally by the local PMUs of Maroua and Bamenda with support from the central PMU and the PMC
Structuring of the construction phase	Primary contracting work (PC) (study, design, and supervision of works) carried out by a consortium of Cameroonian and Congolese companies • Bafoussam : N/A - No sports infrastructure built • Bertoua : Construction company = Cameroonian company • Garoua : Construction company = Chadian company based in Cameroon	Bamenda : • A Cameroonian construction company selected for each facility • Primary Contractor: consortium of Cameroonian companies Maroua : • A single Cameroonian construction company selected to build all sports infrastructure • Primary Contractor: consortium of Cameroonian companies Primary Contractor (PC) responsible for inspection and supervision of works
Structuring of the operational phase	The site operating models are primarily based on management by private companies, mainly through lease contracts	
Examples of cost estimates	Garoua: approximately €350,000 per site (multisports facilities: handball, basketball, volleyball and tennis courts, and gym)	Bamenda: an average of €200,000 per site (construction of 4 sites) Maroua: an average of €250,000 per site (construction of 3 sites)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Best practices:

Introduction of sports facilities as “community hubs” that boost the attractiveness of urban areas: the term “sport” was only referred to sporadically in the design brief for the CR1 and CR2 projects, but the concept has been more fully integrated from the design phase of CR2 onwards. Sport is recognized as a key factor for improving people’s well-being, and for its essential role in social cohesion. These facilities are designed as social hubs for local residents of intermediate cities, that go far beyond simple sports centers. Consequently, the accessibility of these sites is a top priority when making decisions about their management and operation. Selecting the right managers or leaseholders to run these sports facilities, based on their business model, experience, and profile, is key to guaranteeing access for the majority of local residents. When these conditions are met, these spaces can become strategic drivers of the city’s sports policy.

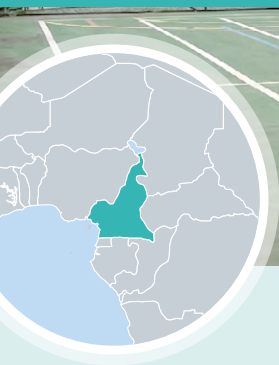
Recommendations :

- ▶ **Involve local stakeholders and sporting organizations as much as possible:** taking on board the needs of end-users and handing over the management of this infrastructure to municipalities are areas for improvement that should be taken forward in future projects. In fact, involving users from the design phase is crucial to ensure maximum take-up of these facilities by users, sports associations, and schools. Although these projects are managed at a city level, it is essential to involve stakeholders from the sports industry in project development, in view of how this sector is structured in Cameroon, and its reliance on the Ministry of Sports.
- ▶ **Install lighting at sports facilities:** install suitable lighting to optimize the use of facilities, particularly in the evening, to improve accessibility and safety, and maximize their use.
- ▶ **Assess the capacity of local companies to meet technical requirements:** conduct a rigorous selection process for local companies and build their capacities to meet the technical specifications for sports facilities, in order to minimize the risk of rapid deterioration.

CASE STUDY

CAMEROON

Stormwater drainage project
in Douala



© AFD

Type of infrastructure



BENEFICIARY: Urban Community of Douala (CUD)

PROJECT OWNER: CUD

OPERATOR: CUD or Leaseholders

FINANCING MECHANISM:
Loan and Debt Reduction-
Development Contract (C2D)

AMOUNT:
€166 million for the entire project

AFD DIVISION: Water and Sanitation

PROJECT TIMELINE

"Improving the Living
Environment" Component



BACKGROUND

Providing people living in poverty with access to basic urban services is a top priority for the Urban Community of Douala (CUD). As a result, one of the key challenges for the authorities of the CUD is to improve the living conditions of people in under-equipped or underserved neighborhoods. In particular, this includes improving public services, access to facilities, and the living environment (sanitation, health, education, safety, and access to water and electricity). The second component of the Douala stormwater drainage project, aimed at "Improving the Living Environment", includes the development of local sports facilities. The goal is to use land freed up by the construction work completed for the first component of this project.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Providing local sports facilities is aligned with the program's overall objectives of improving the living environment, enabling residents to reclaim the land – not just the drainage channels – and transforming these spaces into public urban sports facilities.

ORGANIZATION

Landowner	Urban Community of Douala
Project Owner (PO)	Urban Community of Douala
Type of facility	Local sports facilities, comprising multisports facilities, fitness trails, children's playgrounds, food service areas, outdoor social spaces, and fitness stations
Structuring of the study phase	Feasibility studies: Louis Berger International
Structuring of the construction phase	Primary Contractor: Louis Berger International
Structuring of the operational phase	Lease contract awarded by the Urban Community of Douala with a leaseholder selected for each site
Average cost per facility	Total cost of sports facilities: €1.5 M
	Construction of a multisports facility: €120,000



© AFD



PROJECT DELIVERABLES

The “Sport” aspect of the Douala stormwater drainage project aims to achieve several objectives as part of the “Improving Living Conditions” component:

Making neighborhoods less isolated: one of the project’s primary objectives is to open up the neighborhoods concerned, thus allowing communities to reclaim the drainage systems that cut through their environment. This initiative aims to foster a positive attitude towards these waterways, by encouraging local residents to use the newly accessible spaces rather than disregarding them.

Improving accessibility: roadworks are being carried out as part of this project to improve accessibility to these neighborhoods. The construction of new sports infrastructure required additional roadworks that were not in the initial plans, but which are fully aligned with improving residents’ general quality of life.

Creating community sports hubs: lastly, the project aims to create dynamic community sports spaces to revitalize neighborhoods. This type of infrastructure helps to prevent the misuse of public spaces by offering constructive and entertaining activities for local residents, thus strengthening social bonds within communities.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Recommendations from the project:

- ▶ **Identify operational and development needs from the project design phase:** from the outset, develop a plan for the future use of spaces created around this infrastructure (such as drainage systems) to prevent them from being taken over for informal uses before they have been developed for specific infrastructure, such as sports facilities.
- ▶ **Organize preliminary consultations with stakeholders:** conduct an extensive consultation process with local stakeholders (athletes, community groups, residents, etc.) before the planning phase of projects. This helps ensure that all stakeholders’ needs are taken into account and the use of these spaces is evenly distributed.

- ▶ **Monitor the support provided by the Project Management Consultant (PMC) up to the operational phase:** ensure that the PMC continues to provide support up to the infrastructure’s operational phase to ensure effective and sustainable management after the construction work has been completed.
- ▶ **Identify and address technical constraints related to the site’s characteristics from the design phase:** in particular, identify flood-risk areas upstream in the process to avoid any unforeseen issues and technical complications during the construction phase.
- ▶ **Select materials and equipment suited to local conditions:** choose surfacing and materials tailored to the site’s specific characteristics, the intended use, and management capabilities/resources to prevent rapid deterioration of facilities (such as synthetic turf for children’s playgrounds).
- ▶ **Ensure good visibility and install adequate lighting in public spaces:** provide sufficient lighting that is well-distributed across all activity areas to encourage use, particularly in the evening, and to prevent certain zones from becoming deserted or unsafe.
- ▶ **Strategically position sports infrastructure near residential areas and other leisure facilities:** create sports fields and other facilities close to lively areas (with bars, restaurants and shops) to encourage their frequent use and create a vibrant community hub.
- ▶ **Ensure professional and consistent management of sites:** assign site management to competent operators, whether specialist companies or managers with experience in maintaining and managing public infrastructure, to ensure their proper maintenance and continued use.
- ▶ **Prioritize facilities that are compact in design to facilitate their operation:** design play areas and sports facilities with compact layouts, by grouping facilities around community hubs, to optimize their management, programming, and use.
- ▶ **Involve the project owner’s relevant departments from the first phases of the project:** involve the project owner’s departments responsible for young people, sports, and urban planning from the design phase of urban projects to improve coordination and maximize the effectiveness of development work in line with local requirements.

CASE STUDY

FRANCE

Program to construct 5,000 local sports facilities



Type of infrastructure



BENEFICIARY: Local authorities or sports associations

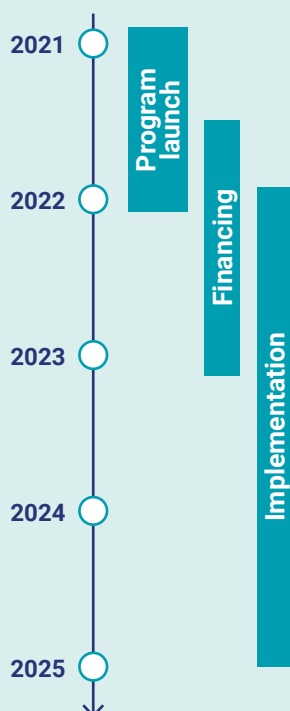
PROJECT OWNER:
Local authorities or associations

OPERATOR:
Local authorities or associations

FINANCING MECHANISM:
Grants

AMOUNT: €200 million (maximum of €500,000 per facility – minimum contribution of 20% by the project owner)

PROJECT TIMELINE



BACKGROUND

Local sports facilities are crucial for **promoting participation in sports for all** particularly in rural areas and priority neighborhoods, where **there is often a shortage of infrastructure**. This lack of available facilities exacerbates **inequalities in access to sports**, by limiting opportunities for participation among many local communities, especially young people and socially disadvantaged groups.

To address this issue, the French government and local authorities have implemented various initiatives, including the program to **construct 5,000 new local sports facilities, led by the French National Sports Agency (ANS)**, using lightweight construction, modular-design, and eco-friendly practices.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this ANS program is to **reduce these disparities in access to sports infrastructure in France** in rural areas, priority neighborhoods (QPVs) or their immediate surroundings, and in France's overseas territories. Launched in 2021, this program set an objective to **finance the construction of 5,000 sports facilities** by 2024, with a budget of €200 million.

These facilities are **lightweight, modular structures that are easy to access**: outdoor basketball courts, multisports facilities, skateparks, urban fitness spaces, five-a-side football pitches, mobile swimming pools, etc. These facilities meet the **specific needs of each local area**, providing everyone with access to a wide range of sports, including young people, families, and those who are generally marginalized from sports activities.

This program has also adopted an **environmentally-friendly approach**, incorporating sustainability criteria such as the use of eco-friendly materials and energy-efficient systems. Developed in the lead-up to the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, it has helped cement this event's **lasting sporting legacy** by promoting social inclusion and equal access to sports across the entire country.

ORGANIZATION

Landowner	The project initiator (local authority or association) must provide proof of land ownership or use rights for a minimum period of 10 years from the date of completion of the construction work.
Project Owner (PO)	Local authorities or associations
Type of facility	Various facilities: outdoor basketball courts, multisports facilities, skateparks, urban fitness areas, five-a-side football pitches, and even mobile swimming pools
Structuring of the study phase	Standard project ownership structure or direct procurement of equipment and facilities by the local authority or association
Structuring of the operational phase	Local authorities or associations
Cost	Program totaling €200 million: • €195 million in grants awarded • 5,507 facilities installed • Average grant rate of approximately 55% • Average grant per facility of €36,000 • 93% of projects led by local authorities



PROJECT DELIVERABLES

The French National Sports Agency's "5,000 Local Sports Facilities" project has had a wide-ranging impact and attempted to bring about lasting change in access to sports in France:

Reducing inequalities in access to sports: by constructing facilities in rural areas and priority neighborhoods (QPVs), the project has made sports more accessible to communities lacking major sports facilities.

Increasing participation in sports: by providing local sports facilities, more people – especially young people – can take part in regular physical activity, thus promoting public health and well-being.

Fostering social cohesion: sports facilities in local neighborhoods become meeting places, encouraging social interaction and helping build community spirit in areas that are sometimes isolated or disadvantaged.

Extending the legacy of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games: the program is helping to ensure the long-term use of sports infrastructure across the country, continuing the momentum gained during the Olympics beyond 2024.

Promoting sustainable development: by using eco-friendly materials and energy-efficient systems, the project is promoting environmentally responsible practices, inspiring a new generation of sustainable sports facilities.

In conclusion, the aim of this project is to make sports accessible to all, strengthen social cohesion, and integrate sustainable development practices into sports infrastructure.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Best practices:

During this program's implementation, various best practices were identified to help ensure the success and impact of this type of initiative.

- ▶ **Involvement of local stakeholders:** working closely with regional authorities, sports associations, and local residents was essential to design facilities tailored to the specific needs of each community.
- ▶ **Versatility and modular design of facilities:** the use of light construction techniques and the installation of modular facilities, such as multisports facilities, increases their adaptability and capacity to accommodate a wide range of sports activities, as well as making maintenance easier.

- ▶ **Environmental criteria:** the use of sustainable materials and eco-friendly solutions, such as energy-efficient equipment, has maximized the positive ecological impact of these facilities.
- ▶ **Accessibility and inclusivity:** the facilities have been designed to be accessible to as many people as possible, including people with disabilities, while being located near residential areas and vibrant community hubs.
- ▶ **Project monitoring and evaluation:** the establishment of monitoring and evaluation systems means that ongoing projects can be adapted and the lessons learned can then be used to inform future infrastructure projects.

These best practices have maximized the program's social, environmental, and economic impact by providing sustainable, local facilities tailored to the needs of local communities.

Recommendations :

- ▶ **Tailor infrastructure to meet local needs:** precisely assess the specific requirements and activities in each area to design infrastructure tailored to local residents' needs.
- ▶ **Encourage greater involvement from local authorities and secure additional funding:** establish strong financial partnerships, support local authorities to facilitate co-financing mechanisms and ensure project maintenance.
- ▶ **Ensure infrastructure maintenance and durability:** allocate specific funds or establish partnerships to ensure regular maintenance of facilities, particularly in rural areas and priority neighborhoods.
- ▶ **Incorporate environmental standards:** comply with ecological criteria and use sustainable materials while anticipating any additional costs and potential technical constraints, and ensure rigorous oversight of the companies involved.
- ▶ **Inform and involve the general public:** organize outreach initiatives to encourage local residents to take ownership of these facilities and ensure sufficient and regular use.

Sports infrastructure in schools and universities



WHY FUND SCHOOL SPORTS FACILITIES?

Schools and universities are among the best environments for young people to access physical education and sports. A supportive and inclusive approach to sports in schools helps improve academic performance, teaches pupils about inclusion and develops their social skills, and can reduce school dropout rates, particularly by boosting self-esteem. With this in mind, the Education, Training, and Employment (EFE) Division of AFD Group is involved in financing various aspects of “sports” projects with the aim of:

- ▶ supporting the implementation of sport-based education policies and the development of sports through education and vocational training;
- ▶ incorporating sports into school curricula to improve learning, skills, socioeconomic integration, and employability;
- ▶ constructing, renovating, and providing equipment for school sports facilities;
- ▶ providing maintenance and management services for durable infrastructure which is accessible to the most disadvantaged groups;
- ▶ promoting access to sports for girls and women, their empowerment through sports, and gender equality;
- ▶ training professionals and developing their skills in sport-related professions: teaching, coaching, management, event organization, etc.

Sport in education can be approached in various complementary ways:

- ▶ Sport as an integral part of the school curriculum: for example, the France-Comoros Development Plan, a project to improve learning conditions in elementary and middle schools and promote sports, has adopted an integrated educational approach to develop young people's basic skills.
- ▶ Physical education as a vehicle for teaching life skills: in this case, sport provides an opportunity to raise awareness of sustainable development or environmental issues. For example, in 2018, AFD Group signed a partnership with the NBA to promote education through sport for five million young people in five African countries. The purpose of this agreement is to teach students the fundamental skills and values associated with sport (teamwork, respect, perseverance and community spirit) at the local level and to raise awareness among young people about local issues (e.g. citizenship in Morocco or health and waste management in Nigeria).

- ▶ Using sports education to “connect people” and as a means of fostering social cohesion and reducing inequalities of all forms. In Liberia, AFD Group has signed partnership agreements with Mercy Corps and Play International to develop community educational projects and programs aimed at the long-term socio-professional integration of vulnerable young people, using sports as a “hook”. Its partnership-based approach is key to its success in financing these initiatives. The partnership structure lends itself particularly well to the sports sector, as the sports value chain involves a diverse range of stakeholders (the government, local authorities, civil society organizations and the private sector), each operating on different levels, and which must work together to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of the Group's actions.

WHAT IS A SCHOOL SPORTS FACILITY?

School sports infrastructure or facilities are designed for practicing sports in educational institutions (elementary schools, middle schools, high schools and universities). Located within the institution's grounds or in the immediate vicinity, they must be accessible to students and suitable for teaching physical education and sports programs. These facilities are generally multipurpose and include gymnasiums, outdoor playing fields, swimming pools, and athletics tracks, and may be shared with local clubs. They play a key role in promoting sports among young people and must meet safety and accessibility standards. In many countries, these facilities are scarce or in a dilapidated condition, thus posing challenges in terms of investment, maintenance, and optimal use. Due to the lack of public sports infrastructure, these facilities are often used outside of school hours by associations, sports clubs, or local communities, and even by the general public.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A SCHOOL SPORTS FACILITY

Geographical scope:

- Universities may own or operate international, national, or regional sports infrastructure or even local sports facilities.
- Training centers, high schools, or middle schools may own or operate regional or local sports facilities.
- Schools have their own local sports facilities or use those available in the area. Active design can also be incorporated into school playgrounds or the areas surrounding the school.

Accessibility: school sports facilities must be within walking distance. For schools without their own sports fields, local sports facilities must be accessible on foot to provide students with easy access to their physical education (PE) classes. If designed to host school or extracurricular sports competitions, these facilities must be accessible via public transport.

Programming: the size of school sports facilities depends on the type of infrastructure (international/national, regional or local). The primary criterion is that the facility can accommodate school students during designated time periods. Time slots at the end of the day or on weekends can also be used to organize sports activities for extracurricular clubs, as well as school and university competitions.

Uses: multisport stadiums, multipurpose gyms (basketball, handball, volleyball and badminton, etc.), swimming pools, parks, and green spaces belonging to schools.

WHAT BUSINESS MODEL AND MANAGEMENT MODEL ARE REQUIRED?

Project Owner: projects to build or renovate local sports facilities are usually managed by the government, and through the Departments of Education or Sports for university sports projects in particular¹.

Program financing: The majority of AFD financing for projects to construct or renovate sports infrastructure is granted through program financing.

Cost: The financing model is primarily based on public subsidies. The design and build costs are mainly covered by public funding. Construction costs vary depending on the sports facilities and amenities involved.

If the school owns the sports facility, maintenance costs can still be a challenge for ensuring its durability over the long term. Charging fees for the use of sports facilities outside of school hours by after-school clubs or local residents can be an effective way of financing maintenance costs. The issue of whether the space is open or closed may also need to be addressed in order to strike a balance between accessibility and the risk of damage to the sports facilities.

Operating and programming costs must be considered when hiring PE teachers. If elementary schools cannot afford to hire a specialist physical education teacher, class teachers can teach physical education if necessary.

Operating and maintenance models: For sports facilities owned by schools, only public contractual frameworks apply, ranging from land ownership to operation and programming, including design and build contracts. However, an operating and maintenance model may require a service concession contract (through public management or leasing).

SOME EXAMPLES OF COSTS

MULTI-PURPOSE SCHOOL GYM:

Construction: €3-8 million (costs vary widely)

Design: 10 to 15% of the construction cost

Operation and maintenance:

€100,000 to €300,000 per year

> **Ratio of capital to annual operating costs:** 3.5 to 5%

OUTDOOR SPORTS FIELD (ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL)

Construction: €400,000 to €1.5 million

Design: 10 to 15% of the construction cost

Operation and maintenance:

€20,000 to €80,000 per year

> **Ratio of capital to annual operating costs:** 2 to 4%

THE UNIQUE ASPECTS OF SCHOOL SPORTS

Outside of PE classes, well-designed school grounds can encourage children and students to participate in physical activity and sports. A more comprehensive approach to design can therefore be adopted:

Provide cover in school playgrounds: the school playground is an active space for children. Planting greenery in the playground or installing covered play areas can encourage physical activity and sport participation despite adverse weather conditions (rain, hot weather, etc.).

Reconfigure the space in playgrounds to encourage girls to take part in physical activity and sports: in France, in 2024, football pitches took up 90% of the available space in playgrounds and 70% of the communal space. While this figure does not apply to all playgrounds in the countries where AFD Group operates, it does raise questions about how space is shared between girls and boys within the same playground. There are various potential solutions to promote physical activity and sports among girls: holding a co-design workshop with neighborhood children (including girls) to best identify their needs regarding the layout of their future playground; proposing ground markings inspired by active design and developed together with children (such as running lanes), or relocating sports fields (preferably with field markings for multiple sports) to an area away from the center of the playground.

The “Streets for Kids” initiative is expanding the boundaries of the school playground: in addition to participating in physical activity and sports at school, many children also walk to school. However, depending on the school’s location within the urban area, road traffic may pose a safety risk for children. More careful planning of urban development around schools can make children’s routes to school safer and these areas can even be viewed as an extension of the playground. Pedestrianized streets – whether closed to traffic or not, and where there is a clear and distinct separation between the road and the sidewalk (using barriers, signs and trees) – combined with features of active design, help create a more peaceful environment and encourage children to be more physically active.



FIND OUT MORE:

- [Case Study – ISONGA Program, Rwanda](#)
- [Case Study – Sport and Education, Tunisia](#)
- [Tool Sheet – Active Design](#)



CASE STUDY

RWANDA ISONGA Program



© Leslie AKANYONI / AFD

Type of infrastructure

I/N	R	L	D
-----	---	---	---

BENEFICIARY: Government of Rwanda: Ministry of Education and Ministry of Sports

TECHNICAL SUPPORT:
France Éducation Internationale, INSEP/UNSS

OPERATOR: Schools

FINANCING MECHANISM: Grant

AMOUNT: €1.5 M

AFD DIVISION: Education, Training and Employment

PROJECT TIMELINE



BACKGROUND

In Rwanda, sport has been a key driver of policy to promote and reconstruct the country following the 1994 genocide. The country has set itself apart with one of the most dynamic approaches to sports development in Africa, both through the organization of international events (such as the Basketball Africa League finals and the 2025 UCI Road World Championships) and through its ambitious policy to promote sports for all.

The “Sector Strategic Plan (SPP) for Sports and Culture” embedded sports policy within the education system, which then gave rise to the ISONGA program. The aim of the 2020–2024 version of this program is to identify and develop talent in schools, particularly in football, basketball, volleyball, handball, athletics, and cycling. What’s more, the centers of excellence created in 2010 to identify talent – formerly managed by sports federations – have now been integrated into the ISONGA program under ministerial management.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

AFD has provided a grant to support the Rwandan Ministry of Sports in implementing the ISONGA program. This support also covers the renovation of 27 sports facilities, in various schools and centers of excellence. The ISONGA program has two main components:

- **Component 1:** technical assistance to help the Ministry of Education implement sports policy in schools (€450,000);
- **Component 2:** support for the implementation of the ISONGA program, including the development of sports infrastructure (€1 million).

ORGANIZATION

Landowner	Public land (schools)
Type of facility	Renovation or construction of 27 sports facilities in schools and centers of excellence, including: • 3 football pitches • 6 basketball courts; • 9 volleyball courts; • 4 handball courts; • 1 athletics track; • 1 multisports facility (volleyball and basketball)
Structure selected for the study phase	Feasibility study conducted by BearingPoint + field assignment carried out by the AFD teams
Structure selected for the construction phase	Direct supervision by the Ministry of Sports via its program management unit (SPIU) Construction work carried out by contractors from the community: however, the quality fell short of expectations due to a shortage of qualified labor
Structuring of the operational phase	Maintenance managed by schools
Cost of land	Total cost of infrastructure: €300,000

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Promoting sports participation for all: by renovating sports facilities in schools, implementing specialist training programs for teachers in sports coaching, and organizing campaigns to promote sports – particularly for women – the ISONGA program aims to facilitate access to sports for children in schools.

Development of an elite sports system: by improving the system to identify talent, creating centers of excellence, training qualified coaches, organizing training camps, and introducing competitions between the various centers of excellence, the ISONGA program aims to boost the development of elite sports in Rwanda.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Best practices:

- ▶ **Development of a structured sports policy:** implementing a clearly-defined sports policy helps better organize sports resources and define the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders involved (ministries, Olympic and Paralympic committees, federations, schools, etc.).
- ▶ **An integrated approach to sport at all levels:** organizing the “sports system” enables distinct roles and responsibilities in each field of sport to be defined – whether school sports, elite sports, the renovation or construction of infrastructure, or the “sport for all” policy – while ensuring that each area is developed independently.
- ▶ **Promotion of talent identification and the centers of excellence:** establishing sports classes, centers of excellence, and talent identification programs facilitates the training of elite athletes and encourages young people’s participation in sports.
- ▶ **Accessibility of sports facilities for all members of the general public:** the ISONGA project involves renovating sports facilities that can be used by both school students and athletes in centers of excellence, thereby promoting sports participation for all.
- ▶ **Development of synergies between sports facilities and schools:** creating strong links between elite facilities and schools ensures that both groups – students and elite athletes – benefit from shared and consistent access to sports facilities.
- ▶ **Incorporation of gender equality and inclusion:** 44% of the 600 student-athletes selected for Phase 1 are women. Despite this impressive figure, gender issues are still not always considered: lack of specific equipment (men’s sports-wear), female coaches, and women’s changing rooms.



Recommendations :

- ▶ **Establish national technical standards to ensure the durability of sports infrastructure:** the lack of clear technical standards for the renovation and maintenance of sports facilities has accelerated the rapid deterioration of infrastructure. The establishment of national technical standards covering the entire infrastructure lifecycle (from design to maintenance) would improve contractor selection and supervision of works, and ensure better quality control during the construction or renovation of facilities.
- ▶ **Improve the strategy for sports policy and its governance:** the development of a multi-year performance plan with clear targets and a budget that identifies the required resources and deliverables, as well as shared responsibility among all program stakeholders, would maximize the impact of the ISONGA program.
- ▶ **Further integrate gender-related issues: phase 2 of the program should build on existing initiatives to promote gender equality through several complementary measures:** the recruitment of female coaches, comprehensive awareness-raising (including among communities) and training for coaches on gender issues, the installation of single-sex and secure changing rooms, as well as the provision of sports equipment suitable for different body types (footwear, clothing and sports bras, etc.) and menstrual hygiene products.

CASE STUDY

TUNISIA
Sport et Éducation



Lycée sportif Pierre de Coubertin, 2024. © Julien Puiffe / ALCELIA

BACKGROUND

In Tunisia, only a small percentage of the population participates in physical activity or sports (just 17% in 2024), due in particular to the country's limited and low-quality sports infrastructure and a lack of programmed activities. As a result, the Tunisian government is aiming to boost participation by focusing specifically on physical activity and sports provided in the country's schools.

The "Sport and Education" project has therefore been launched to promote sports participation in schools, encourage students to take up Olympic sports, increase girls' participation in sports, improve academic performance, and instill the values of inclusion and social cohesion.

Moreover, the Tunisian education system has been affected by two key issues: firstly, a shortage of PE teachers and, secondly, the difficulties faced by elite athletes when entering the workforce. The Pierre de Coubertin Sports High School is currently the only school where elite athletes can continue their studies while meeting their sporting obligations.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The "Sport and Education" project has two main components:

- ▶ **the establishment of Olympic clubs** in around 100 schools in each governorate of the country;
- ▶ **the extensive renovation of the Pierre de Coubertin Sports High School**, including the refurbishment of the tennis court, the multisports facility, as well as the gym and weight room.

ORGANIZATION

Landowner	Public land: State
Type of facility	• Pierre de Coubertin High School: tennis court, multisports facility, gym, and weight room • For other beneficiary schools: multisports facilities
Structure selected for the study phase	• Feasibility study: consortium of French (ICE and Sfere) and international (South Consulting Organisation) engineering consulting firms • Studies prior to construction work: Tunisian consortium
Structure selected for the construction phase	Work scheduled to begin in September 2026 at the earliest
Structuring of the operational phase	To be determined
Cost of land	• Average cost of multisports facilities (a total of 100 facilities to be built in 100 schools): €40,000 • Renovation of Pierre de Coubertin High School (tennis court, multisports facilities, gym and weight room, dormitory, and cafeteria): €1.8 M

Type of infrastructure



BENEFICIARY:
Government of Tunisia

PROJECT OWNER:
Ministry of Education

OPERATOR:
To be determined

FINANCING MECHANISM:
Grant

AMOUNT: €7 M
AFD DIVISION: Education

PROJECT TIMELINE



PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Increasing girls' participation in sports: by renovating these sports facilities and related amenities (restrooms, changing rooms) to make them more inclusive, providing training for teachers on gender equality and inclusion, organizing fun games and sporting activities based around these themes to raise awareness among students, and delivering a dedicated child protection program in schools.

Improving social inclusion through school sports: by providing high-quality facilities and Olympic club programs, sports are integrated more widely into schools, thus serving communities that currently do not have access to these opportunities. An additional aim of renovating the Pierre de Coubertin Sports High School is to accommodate students from outside the Greater Tunis area within this facility specializing in sports-study programs, and thus to promote social diversity.

Developing students' academic and interpersonal skills through sport: the Olympic clubs will adopt an "education through sport" methodology. The goal is to use sports to help students progress in other academic subjects such as history and math.



Pierre de Coubertin Sport School, 2024 © Julien Puiffe/ALCELIA



Pierre de Coubertin Sport School, 2024 © Julien Puiffe/ALCELIA

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Recommendations :

- ▶ **Prioritize actions and determine the appropriate scale** for national projects, like the renovation of the Pierre de Coubertin High School and the establishment of Olympic clubs, while taking into account a diverse range of needs and budgetary constraints, in order to make effective trade-offs between construction work, support modules, and training.
- ▶ **Develop a management and financing model for infrastructure maintenance** in line with the Sport and Education program, that meets the need to generate sufficient revenue or secure financing to cover maintenance costs and thus ensure the long-term viability of the facilities.
- ▶ **Facilitate access to sports facilities in schools** by devising solutions that provide access to local residents outside of school hours. This involves developing a management model that balances the needs of students with those of the community, in order to maximize the use of these facilities.

Sports facilities delivered by Urban Fabric Initiatives

WHAT IS AN URBAN FABRIC INITIATIVE?

Urban Fabric Initiatives are experimental urban initiatives led by Agence Française de Développement, which aim to create public spaces or local community facilities through a collaborative approach, and to support the programming of these sites.

These initiatives are implemented alongside urban projects financed by AFD Group and encourage buy-in from local residents by **implementing pilot development actions to trial certain uses or types of facilities**, prior to the launch of the urban project. Urban Fabric Initiatives may provide additional facilities not included in the project's initial plans, or trial developments ahead of the program, on an interim basis. Urban Fabric Initiatives aim to **boost citizen engagement** in the projects undertaken by public stakeholders, by placing users at the heart of the process. If the solutions trialed are effective, they are then **replicated by the project associated with the Urban Fabric Initiative**.



FOCUS

Stages of the collaborative process for an Urban Fabric Initiative

Participatory assessment: users are prioritized throughout the process, through targeted discussion groups, mapping of uses at the neighborhood and site levels, and events designed to reach marginalized groups, etc.

Co-design: users take a lead role in designing the site, defining priority uses, the site layout and its composition, during a series of participatory workshops.

Urban Fabric Initiatives are particularly useful when developing sports infrastructure, as this approach involves identifying the needs of various users to ensure the design is inclusive, as well as facilitating the activation and management of sports facilities.

TYPES OF SPORTS FACILITIES DELIVERED BY URBAN FABRIC INITIATIVES

An Urban Fabric Initiative is generally granted around €1 million to finance a range of initiatives and developments within a given area. This limited budget aims to cover both infrastructure and social engineering, which accounts for just over half of the total cost. Consequently, the construction budget for a facility typically ranges from €40,000 to €100,000. Urban Fabric Initiatives therefore finance small-scale sports facilities or development projects:

Active design: Urban Fabric Initiatives may encourage and promote active mobility by creating pedestrian footpaths with activity areas and social spaces along the route: pedestrianized streets around schools or workplaces, access to new public transport links, or the development of stairways and alleyways.

Sports equipment: public spaces may be designed to meet physical activity requirements. For example, by installing fitness trails (see [Case Study – Urban Fabric Initiative in Ouagadougou](#)), a skatepark and gym that offers subsidized rates and support for people with disabilities.

Additional facilities to promote participation in sports: the co-design approach undertaken by Urban Fabric Initiatives helps identify users' specific needs. When it comes to existing facilities, Urban Fabric Initiatives have, for example, installed changing rooms to encourage women's participation in sports (see [Case Study – Urban Fabric Initiative in Tunisia](#)), or bleachers to provide shade and a social meeting space. When constructing multi-use public spaces, they may include an area specifically for sport, such as a concrete slab with a basketball hoop.

Temporary facilities: installing low-cost, temporary sports facilities (temporary sports courts) serves a dual purpose: (i) rapidly meeting users' needs for facilities, and (ii) providing a prototype to help fine-tune the design of the permanent facility and its management model.

Permanent local sports facilities: while Urban Fabric Initiatives have a relatively small budget, it will usually cover the financing of certain small-scale local sports facilities. If local residents communicate a need for these facilities during the assessment phase, it may be possible to renovate or construct sports fields by working closely with sports associations and users. This will require support from specialists with expertise in the technical design, operation, and maintenance of local sports facilities.

 FOCUS
Urban Fabric Initiatives: a tool to support associated projects

In contrast to other citizen participation initiatives, **Urban Fabric Initiatives involve the construction of facilities** following a co-design process. These initiatives not only quickly meet a need, they also collect feedback from users that can be used to continuously improve the design of the facilities, and provide a tangible space around which a management solution can be developed.

However, **Urban Fabric Initiatives are not standalone projects**. Therefore, the success of an Urban Fabric Initiative is measured in terms of the quality of the design and management model delivered by the **project to which it is linked**. Although certain quality standards must be met, the facilities delivered by these Urban Fabric Initiatives are above all prototypes from which lessons can be learned that will then inform the associated project and the practices of public authorities.

A successful sports infrastructure project by an Urban Fabric Initiative will not necessarily deliver a large number of durable sports facilities, but rather sports infrastructure designed to meet the needs of the greatest number of people, based on an inclusive and sustainable management model.

WHAT IMPACT AND ADDED VALUE CAN SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE FROM URBAN FABRIC INITIATIVES ACHIEVE?

Facilities that are built rapidly to meet the needs of residents. An Urban Fabric Initiative can meet residents' needs and expectations before the associated large-scale project is completed.

Facilities that are easily replicable on a large scale. While requiring substantial resources despite the small scale of these facilities (due to the social engineering required to engage the community and facilitate the collaborative process), it is precisely this investment that makes these solutions suitable for wider roll-out. Large-scale infrastructure projects can thus capitalize on the work carried out by Urban Fabric Initiatives.

More inclusive sports facilities resulting from a collaborative process that ensures everyone's specific needs are taken into account in the design and chosen management solution (women, people with disabilities, children, and seniors).

Increase in sports participation by working with users to (i) create infrastructure designed to encourage physical activity, and (ii) organize events to boost engagement (tournaments, calls for projects to set-up teams, etc.).

Making optimal use of small public spaces to promote participation in physical activity and sports. Whether using land left over from an urban project that required multiple acquisitions, or developing small pockets of public space, Urban Fabric Initiatives operate at grassroots level to provide facilities that promote sport participation.

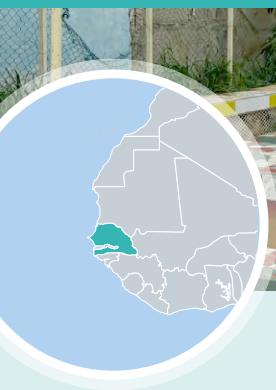

FIND OUT MORE:

- [Case Study – Urban Fabric Initiative in Dakar](#)
- [Case Study – Urban Fabric Initiative in Tunis](#)
- [Case Study – Urban Fabric Initiative in Ouagadougou](#)

CASE STUDY

SENEGAL

Urban Fabric Initiative in Dakar



Pikine site in 2024 after two years of operation
© ALCELIA

Type of infrastructure

I/N	R	PL	D
-----	---	----	---

BENEFICIARY: City of Dakar

PROJECT OWNER: Executive Council for Urban Transport (CETUD)

OPERATOR: Management committees

FINANCING MECHANISM: Grant

AMOUNT: €555,000, including €30,000 for the Pikine site - sports component

AFD DIVISION: Mobility

PROJECT TIMELINE



BACKGROUND

Dakar is a major African city undergoing rapid expansion, whose transport infrastructure is becoming increasingly saturated, whether involving private vehicles, public transport networks, motorbikes – including motorcycle taxis – or even travel on foot, due to the major lack of sidewalks.

Two major transportation projects have been implemented under the “Emerging Senegal Plan”: the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and the Regional Express Train (TER).

These large-scale projects have resulted in leftover plots of land, thus opening up development opportunities to directly benefit local residents.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

As part of the Urban Fabric Initiative in Dakar (UFID), at the Pikine site, a plot of land between the TER infrastructure and a residential area was converted into a sports facility and social space for residents in the neighborhood.

The Pikine project was developed via a co-construction process with the beneficiaries, thereby optimizing the design, implementation, and management of the infrastructure while meeting the community's specific needs.

ORGANIZATION

Landowner	Public land owned by CETUD (Dakar's transport planning authority)
“Urban Fabric Initiative Operator” responsible for implementing the project	Urban Fabric Initiative consortium made up of: • GRET as the lead operator (NGO) • UrbaSEN and UrbaMonde (NGOs specializing in social engagement) • Collectif Etc (Group of architects specializing in co-design) • TRANSITEC (Engineering consulting firm)
Type of facility	• 1 basketball court (which can also be used as a space for events and fitness classes) • 1 children's playground • 1 social area (with tables and benches) • 1 gazebo
Structuring of the study phase	Design studies conducted by the Urban Fabric Initiative consortium
Structuring of the construction phase	Calls for tenders held by the Urban Fabric Initiative consortium to identify local contractors able to carry out the work
Structuring of the operational phase	Management committee responsible for activity planning, routine maintenance, and renting out the space for events
Cost of land	€30,000



Pikine Site after project handover in 2022
© Studio Bainem – Florent Chiappero

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Using plots of land left over from major projects to create public spaces that meet residents' specific needs, and for sports activities in particular: major transportation projects, such as those in Dakar (BRT and TER), are large-scale initiatives with a significant impact. However, they also present opportunities by freeing up areas of unused land in the immediate vicinity of transport infrastructure, which can be used for urban development projects. The approach adopted by the Urban Fabric Initiative in Dakar (UFID) specifically aims to “uncover new projects” to develop these public spaces that remain underutilized. For example, the Pikine project involved the construction of a basketball court, a children's playground, and a social space with tables.

Developing synergies and involving local stakeholders, both in the design and management of infrastructure, as a vehicle for social cohesion: with the UFID project, local residents and associations were involved in designing and managing the infrastructure. A co-management approach with local stakeholders was adopted from the outset. Giving stakeholders a sense of ownership throughout every stage of the project often guarantees effective and sustainable management of the facilities. It also helps to promote dialogue and social cohesion.

Prioritizing local production: one of the UFID's objectives was to hire local tradespeople to do the work. However, it is important to ensure that this approach allows for the construction of durable facilities.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Best practices:

- ▶ **Actively involve local residents** from the planning phase to identify their needs and adapt development proposals.
- ▶ **Prioritize multi-purpose facilities** like the basketball court, which can be used for both sports and cultural activities.
- ▶ **Establish a management committee** made up of local stakeholders from the construction phase, to oversee the maintenance and operation of the infrastructure.
- ▶ **Promote the use of local materials** when constructing infrastructure, while taking into account durability and suitability for the intended uses.

Recommendations :

- ▶ **Focus on urban planning projects that improve the living environment, like local sports facilities,** when designing urban redevelopment projects to meet local needs.
- ▶ **Define the management model for the sports facility in advance** and, if necessary, **include** municipal teams in the management model.
- ▶ **Hire experts in the field of sport** from the feasibility study phase to design the infrastructure according to its intended uses.
- ▶ **Ensure that management committees stay the course** by organizing regular follow-up sessions and defining a long-term budget to ensure the proper management and maintenance of the infrastructure.
- ▶ **Select suitable materials and qualified contractors** to ensure that sports facilities are durable and fit for purpose.
- ▶ **If local tradespeople lack the required skills, hire a more experienced contractor.** Clauses can be included in the contract that require the contractor to use local labor or even to train local tradespeople so that they acquire these skills.

Active design: urban planning to promote physical activity in cities

WHAT IS ACTIVE DESIGN?

Active design is a concept that originated in the US and Northern Europe to address the health risks associated with sedentary lifestyles. **Active design aims to encourage movement and physical activity by adapting the layout of public spaces.** It often involves a comprehensive approach to urban development in public spaces that aims to make physical activity and sports more accessible to certain marginalized groups of people. These projects, infrastructure, and facilities help individuals to reclaim the public space, promote accessibility and encourage mixed uses. Active design also provides opportunities to capitalize on existing built heritage and make cost-effective improvements.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ACTIVE DESIGN AND TYPICAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Geographical scope: neighborhood/district. These development projects are designed according to the public space available and aimed at local residents or people who pass through the area occasionally.

Accessibility: the infrastructure, facilities, or equipment form an integral part of the public space. They are accessible to everyone and free to use.

Programming and typical development projects: the scale and type of active design projects are tailored to the targeted public space or neighborhood. The design does not have to meet any specific or strict standards, but should focus particularly on groups that feel excluded from public spaces and individuals who are not physically active. As a result, active design can be incorporated into many types of urban development projects to encourage physical activity: pedestrian footpaths, public spaces, parks, waterfronts, areas around drainage systems, train stations and public transport waiting areas, and plots of land around major urban infrastructure, etc.

Uses: Active design encourages physical activity in a broad sense (walking, jogging, recreational games, alternative travel routes, use of stairs, etc.). Events are often held to support the installation of these facilities, which also help to promote more traditional sports (climbing, dance, fitness sessions, etc.).

Examples of these facilities or projects: painting/artwork on the ground and stairs, greening of spaces, installation of sports surfacing, repurposing of street furniture, installation of sports equipment (basketball hoops, gymnastics apparatus, play areas, etc.).

SOME EXAMPLES OF COSTS

FITNESS TRAIL:

Construction (excluding design): €10,000 to €18,000

Operation: €800/year for routine maintenance

GENERAL REDEVELOPMENT STRATEGY:

Construction (excluding design): €15-30 million

Operation: 2 to 4 full-time equivalent (FTE) municipal staff

WHAT BUSINESS MODEL AND MANAGEMENT MODEL ARE REQUIRED?

Project Owner: in the vast majority of cases, active design projects are led by the local authority for the site.

Cost: the financing model depends primarily, if not entirely, on public subsidies but may sometimes involve private investors (mainly during the construction and maintenance phases). Implementation costs vary depending on the scale of the project (see box above). Maintenance costs also vary depending on the complexity of the project but are primarily covered by local authorities. Access is entirely free of charge and open to the general public, with no direct revenue generated. Additional revenue streams (refreshment stands, cafés, shops, etc.) may come from the increased foot traffic in these areas.

Management, operating and programming models: there is no standard management or operating model for these spaces, but they can be used for specific events (in the summer, festivals, weekends, events, etc.) by private companies or civil society organizations (CSOs) that have been commissioned by local authorities. If these facilities have been integrated into existing road infrastructure or other urban services, they are managed and operated based on the existing management plan (such as the local authority's urban road management plan).

MAIN PRINCIPLES OF ACTIVE DESIGN

If a local authority wants to apply this concept in its area, it must firstly consider the type of development project to implement. The term "development project" refers to one or more facilities installed in a specific location or area. The *Guide du Design Actif* recommends structuring this concept **around four main types of development project** defined according to the scale of the work, the type and size of the planned facilities, and the desired impact on the area (social, inclusion, safety, land restoration, etc.).

The four main categories are:

A – Ad hoc, small-scale improvements to public spaces or buildings. For example: paintings or markings on the ground as part of a project to pedestrianize a school street.



B – Urban project incorporating several features of active design. For example: redevelopment of the waterfront in the city of Dakar, incorporating fitness areas, children's playgrounds, and multisports facilities.



C – Network and new urban itinerary promoting active mobility See box entitled “How does this concept help to promote active mobility?” on page 44.



D – Comprehensive active design strategy incorporating all or part of the aforementioned approaches and targeting different areas within a city or neighborhood. For example: design of an active and sports-oriented network across the Plaine Commune area (Seine-Saint-Denis, in the Île-de-France region).



FIVE KEY PRINCIPLES FOR MAXIMUM IMPACT¹

Free use: one of the main goals of active design is to promote uses that complement those offered by traditional sports facilities, whose access is restricted due to their opening hours and target users. Active design must therefore offer and create activities that are accessible to as many people as possible, for independent or supervised use, without membership requirements or restrictions based on physical condition, gender, or the time of day.

Diversity and inclusion: active design focuses particularly on one or more groups that feel excluded from public spaces and on individuals who are least likely to participate in physical activity. Active design thus applies universal design principles to create spaces that are accessible to everyone, regardless of age, gender, social status, or their physical, sensory, or cognitive abilities.

Motivation: active design uses games and exploration to encourage users' participation in physical activity and sports. It is about making these activities desirable and appealing in public spaces and places that were previously abandoned or avoided by a particular group. The use of color, lighting, and materials can make these spaces more welcoming and inviting. However, these improvements alone will not be enough to encourage physical activity and sports. Additional services can be provided (showers, water fountains, changing rooms, lockers for personal belongings, etc.) to facilitate participation. The key factor is for the local authority to organize inclusive and fun activities in these spaces (sports classes, group walks, dance classes), while using them as places to strengthen social ties, and above all, providing support and guidance to people who don't usually participate in physical activity.

User-centric approach: ease of use and user engagement are key to active design. When developing these facilities, the design must be centered around the user. To ensure maximum user engagement, this approach can also be taken a step further by adopting participatory design methods. User needs must be taken into account throughout the entire lifespan of the space to identify new uses as these requirements evolve.

Quality of the urban environment: the active design concept and its method of implementation should be synonymous with quality of life in urban areas. Particular focus should be given to seamlessly integrating facilities and equipment into the architectural environment and landscape. These facilities must form part of the urban environment so that physical activity becomes a natural and spontaneous part of city life.

FOCUS

How does this concept help to promote active travel?

Active design can be a valuable tool for improving the quality of active mobility routes and promoting their use. Various measures can be used to combine these two practices:

- ▶ **Create small spaces for leisure and fun activities along routes:** with markings on the ground, physical or digital signs, and entertaining spaces, etc.
- ▶ **Improve the quality of public spaces along routes:** create or restore continuous pedestrian footpaths and crossings, remove obstacles that block users' visibility, and make routes safer by installing clear and accessible signage (including on pedestrian crossings) for all users.
- ▶ **Create accessible, clearly signposted, and easy-to-follow pedestrian footpaths:** in cities with complex topography or heavy traffic, walking can be faster than using motorized transport, provided people are aware of the shortcuts. Renovating alleyways and narrow streets, installing drainage systems, stairs, and lighting, and developing the areas traveled through will encourage people to use these alternative routes. Installing signs and entertaining features along these routes will also encourage their use by pedestrians.
- ▶ **Create accessible, clearly signposted, and easy-to-follow cycle routes:** following the same logic as with pedestrian footpaths, cycling can be faster than walking or using motorized transport if well-designed and safe cycle lanes are provided. These routes can be used for bike-bus initiatives, (organized group bike rides to school, supervised by adults) for example.

¹ According to the *Guide du Design Actif* published in December 2021 by the French National Agency for Territorial Cohesion (ANCT) and the Terre de Jeux 2024 label.

1.3

Main technical challenges associated with sports infrastructure: from foundations to use

Regardless of the type of sports infrastructure, the success of a project depends as much on its architectural design and technical studies as on the quality of its technical implementation. These factors are particularly important when dealing with the complex climatic conditions in the countries where AFD Group operates, such as extreme temperatures, heavy rainfall, and unstable soil. To ensure the durability, safety, and functionality of facilities, a meticulous approach must be applied throughout every stage of the construction process: from soil preparation to the installation of sports surfacing or equipment.

The factsheets provided in the following pages describe and outline the key technical issues to be addressed from the planning phase: soil assessment and treatment (load bearing capacity, contamination and land reuse), stormwater management and land grading, structural stability and strength, material quality and sourcing, as well as the performance and durability of sports surfaces. They also address essential factors such as accessibility, user comfort, safety, and maintenance, which are key to constructing durable infrastructure that is tailored to local needs and resilient to environmental conditions.



Main technical challenges: recommendations for each phase of the construction project



INTRODUCTION

When constructing sports infrastructure, the overall design phase requires careful consideration, as with any public infrastructure project. Issues relating to climate change, gender equality, and environmental and social sustainability must all be taken into account.

In addition to these factors, all sports infrastructure projects – whether involving active design, national infrastructure or local facilities – share common technical characteristics in the construction phase that require close attention from the planning and design stages, particularly in three key areas:

- 1. Preparatory work** and, more specifically, **site preparation works and drainage**, which are essential to the stability and longevity of sports fields.
- 2. Main structural work**, with a particular focus on **foundations and structures**, especially for major renovation projects where demolition and reconstruction may be required.

- 3. Finishing work**, based on the **various existing types of technical sports surfaces** to ensure the safety, performance, and durability of the facilities

Moreover, **the quality of the sports facilities being installed**, whether fixed (bleachers, basketball hoops or goalposts) or mobile (gymnastics apparatus or track and field equipment), must meet precise specifications that incorporate safety and accessibility standards, in order to fulfill its targeted uses and ensure the facility's longevity.

Lastly, it is essential to **carefully consider the budget required for each phase of the construction project** (preparatory work, main structural work and finishing work), as this may have an impact on the final technical decisions made.

To help you better understand these different construction stages, the table below outlines the major phases of a sports infrastructure project:

Construction phase	Type of work	Key challenges
Preparatory work	Site preparation, clearing of land, earthworks, utilities and access roads, and drainage	Soil quality (mechanical properties, potential contamination, treatment and/or reuse of excavated soil), stormwater management, land grading and stability
Main structural work	Foundations, structures, spectator stands, utilities and access roads	Structural integrity, structural defects, durability, construction methods, material quality and accessibility
Finishing work	Exterior joinery, partitions, surfacing, mechanical and electrical systems, fire safety, utilities and access roads	Quality of sports surfaces, functionality, durability and user comfort
Sports facilities/amenities	Outdoor spaces and sports facilities	Accessibility, user experience, compliance with standards and ease of maintenance



FIND OUT MORE:

- [Technical Sheet – Sport and Climate Change](#)
- [Technical Sheet – Sport and Nature](#)
- [Technical Sheet – Sport and Gender Equality](#)
- [Guides on the Development, Maintenance, and Safety of Sports Facilities in Quebec](#)

CHALLENGES RELATING TO PREPARATORY WORK

Geotechnical studies and site preparation works:

Site preparation works represent the first operational phase of a construction project. This involves preparing the site to accommodate the structures by adapting the natural soil surface (excavation, backfilling, land grading). For site preparation works to be effective, the quality of the foundation on which the entire sports facility will rest must be determined, and the presence of any surface groundwater identified. Failure to prepare the site properly or underestimating requirements in this phase, a poor understanding of soil characteristics (shrinkage-swelling, rainwater-sensitive sand), or inadequate soil management (insufficient compaction or leveling) can cause major issues, even for local facilities. This can lead to construction delays, substantial cost overruns, and may significantly reduce the structure's durability once operational. To determine soil quality and adapt the budget and construction schedule based on the type of site preparation works required, **geotechnical studies must be conducted from the feasibility phase.**

Main challenges: challenges relating to site preparation works will therefore have a direct impact on the choice of site. If a site requires major excavation or stabilization work, this will increase the overall cost of the project. Anticipating water management issues is also essential (see water drainage section below). POs must be particularly vigilant with regard to the implementation and quality of the preliminary soil studies.

What recommendations should be followed?

- ▶ Conduct a geotechnical study from the preliminary design phase (PD).
- ▶ Employ geotechnical specialists during the design phase and call on their expertise if the site is complex or if specific risks are identified (expansive clay, water table, etc.).
- ▶ Allocate a budget for the project's site preparation works, which can account for up to 50% of the total cost (see [Case Study - PEUL III Program](#)).
- ▶ To calculate the total cost of the project during the feasibility phase, include a "soil risk" line item in the projected budget, which represents 5 to 10% of the total construction cost on average.

Water drainage:

Drainage requirements are often underestimated, despite being essential for ensuring the long-term durability of sports infrastructure, particularly outdoor sports fields in tropical, equatorial, or arid climates. Without an effective drainage system, playing surfaces can quickly become unusable, having a negative impact on the user experience and incurring significant repair or alteration costs. Insufficient drainage can also affect the structure itself, causing water infiltration or stagnation, which

can damage the structure to such an extent that it requires partial or total reconstruction.

Main challenges: choosing the right site is crucial. Areas with high rainfall or sloping terrain require customized drainage solutions. This technical issue must be addressed from the design phase as it directly impacts not only the use of the sports field (quality of the surface) but also future maintenance needs. A lack of advance planning for drainage is a common cause of rapid deterioration of these facilities during the operational phase, leaving the project owner with maintenance costs that can spiral out of control.

What recommendations should be followed?

- ▶ Incorporate a hydraulic study (along with the geotechnical study) and a surface water management plan from the initial general design phase (PD/DD – detailed design) in the calls for tenders for the primary contractor (PC).
- ▶ Allocate a drainage budget of at least 5 to 8% of the overall project cost, while anticipating future maintenance cost savings if this issue is properly addressed from the start. On sites that are particularly vulnerable to these issues, studies may identify the need for more extensive drainage work (**see [Case Study – PEUL III Program](#) where this item amounted to 25% of the total project budget due to a failure to anticipate the site's topographical constraints**).
- ▶ Install a perimeter drainage system (around the field) and a central drainage system for outdoor sports fields: install a perimeter drain and a herringbone or comb-profile drainage system under the sports surface. While typically used for elite-level playing fields, these measures are often required when the field is exposed to heavy rainfall.
- ▶ Platforms for sports fields should be slightly raised through site preparation works and should slope (0.8% to 1% gradient, for example) from the center outwards. These measures will help to efficiently drain rainwater away from the field and off the platform.
- ▶ Check that drainage materials surrounding the drains (gravel, geotextiles) comply with the site specifications and the type of soil (to prevent clogging caused by clay soils, for example).

CHALLENGES RELATING TO MAIN STRUCTURAL WORK

Structure foundations and condition:

The foundations and structural elements of any sports field or infrastructure constitute the physical base of the sports facility. They guarantee the stability and safety of the entire building. For renovation projects, it is essential to check the condition of existing structures and foundations: **costs can rapidly increase during the construction phase because of a need for unforeseen demolition/reconstruction work, due to a lack of sufficient prior analysis.**

Main challenges: ensuring the quality of the structural survey carried out is therefore a crucial factor. In the case of renovation/redevelopment projects, a specific approach must be taken during the study phases, defining deliverables that assess (i) the level of deterioration of the structural elements and foundations, and (ii) the type of repairs that need to be carried out (minor renovation, major renovation, or complete overhaul). It is therefore essential for the primary contractor in particular to assess the risk of major renovation work being required to reinforce the structure (often involving scarce and expensive technologies), or demolition/reconstruction work, and to advise the PO on the decisions to be made, ideally from the preliminary design phase.

What recommendations should be followed?

- ▶ Provide for a structural survey including an in-depth assessment (borehole testing, material defect testing, coring, etc.), ideally before the primary contractor's studies or during the preliminary design phase (PD).
- ▶ Hire a structural engineering firm or a structural engineer from the planning/feasibility study phase if specific constraints have been identified.
- ▶ Based on the risk assessment, allocate budget margins in the financing plan according to the anticipated type(s) of final works required.
- ▶ For outdoor sports fields, from the preliminary design (PD) phase, ensure that the field is oriented on a north-south axis to limit glare for users.

CHALLENGES RELATING TO FINISHING WORK

Specialized sports surfaces:

A specialized sports surface ensures quality of use. It has a direct impact on user comfort, safety and performance, as well as the facility's durability. Choosing the wrong type of surface or installing it incorrectly may cause operational issues (risk of accidents, premature wear and tear, unforeseen maintenance costs), and for national/regional facilities, may result in non-compliance with federal standards, thus preventing the hosting of official competitions unless costly repair work is carried out.

Main challenges: choosing the right type of surfacing is the biggest challenge. Making the right choice depends on the intended use (school sports, competitions, multi-purpose event venue), but also on the operating model (intensive or shared use), and on the conditions and climate of the site (level of rainfall, hot weather, sunshine, humidity, etc.). The choice of surfacing will also have an impact on maintenance costs: some materials need extensive and regular maintenance, while others require less upkeep but have a shorter lifespan. Finally, correct installation is essential: hiring a specialist company is strongly recommended, even if the project involves local facilities or basic materials.

What recommendations should be followed?

- ▶ **For local and school facilities in particular, organize consultation sessions with future users from the planning stage** to define their precise needs in terms of performance, use, and comfort.
- ▶ **Only install highly specialized sports surfaces** (synthetic running track, epoxy resin or synthetic turf, natural grass which requires complex maintenance) if the site manager has the necessary skills and resources to carry out proper maintenance, and replacement materials can be sourced locally.
- ▶ **Comply with international standards** according to the type of sport, particularly when constructing or renovating international infrastructure: FIFA (football), FIBA (basketball), World Athletics (athletics), FINA (swimming). For more information, see [Tool Sheet – International Infrastructure](#).
- ▶ **Allocate a budget for the surface of 10 to 20% of the overall project cost**, while also making provision for the operating costs over the facility's entire life cycle. Note that the budget may vary depending on the type of sport and playing surface. For example, a football pitch constructed with synthetic turf will require a budget of around 20% of the total project cost, while the budget for a school gymnasium with a sports floor will amount to 10-15% of the total cost.
- ▶ **For the floor markings of sports facilities, use paint that is resistant to tropical temperatures and climates** (for a multisports facility, for example). The paint chosen should be heat and humidity resistant to ensure **easy maintenance for the facility manager**. Maintenance operations relating to paint removal must be taken into account and aligned with the management/maintenance capabilities of the future operator (cost, corrective or preventive application techniques, paint accessible/available to the future manager, etc.) and in accordance with the maintenance budget allocated by the sports facility manager.

FOCUS POINT 1 - TECHNICAL CHALLENGES:

What type of surfacing should you choose for a multisports facility?

When building or renovating local sports facilities, opting for a multisports field will maximize the range of team sports that can be played in a single area, without having to comply with restrictive international standards on land selection and avoiding the need for significant upkeep and maintenance operations. However, when choosing a specialized sports surface, it is important to consider not only the type of sport, but also the maintenance skills and replacement materials available to the manager.



The table below lists four possible types of surfaces and their installation, management, and maintenance costs, as well as their advantages and disadvantages.

Surface	Cost per square meter (2024)	Advantages	Disadvantages
Asphalt concrete Football Team sports 	Installation: €60-90/m ² Maintenance: €1-5/m ² /year Complete replacement every 10 years on average	• Relatively low installation cost (not technically complex) • Low maintenance costs: weatherproof and durable	• Poor quality of playing surface: hard surface with potential risk of injury in the case of a fall • Can become slippery when wet • Not as esthetically attractive as other surfaces
Asphalt concrete with epoxy resin coating Team sports 	Installation: <u>Concrete:</u> €30-70/m ² <u>Epoxy resin:</u> €100-200/m ² Maintenance: €7-15 €/m ² /year Complete replacement every 10 years on average	• Good quality playing surface • Low maintenance costs	• High cost of installation
Stabilized playing field (sand or clay) Football Team sports 	Installation: €10-30/m ² Maintenance: €1-3/m ² /year Complete replacement every 7 years on average	• Affordable cost of installation • Locally available materials • Good shock absorption • Suitable for dry climates	• Limited playing comfort • Affected by weather conditions (muddy in heavy rain, dusty in dry climates) • High maintenance costs associated with regular leveling of the playing field
Synthetic running track Team sports Athletics track 	Installation: €100-200/m ² Maintenance: €2-5/m ² /year Complete replacement every 10 years on average	• Very good playing quality: elastic surface, good shock absorption • Relatively low maintenance costs, but note that specialist maintenance may be required • Good weather resistance	• High cost of installation: requires specific expertise, which may lead to unexpected increases in cost



POINT FOR CONSIDERATION

Maintenance and management costs

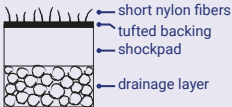
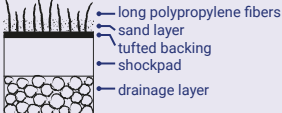
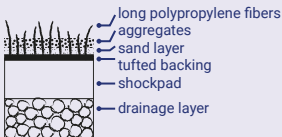
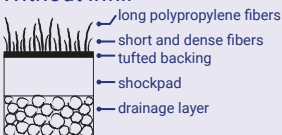
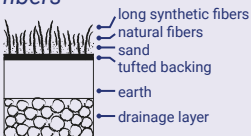
Many sports facilities and spaces in the countries where AFD Group operates show premature signs of wear and tear, due to insufficient budgets, capacities and/or management skills, that have not been anticipated ahead of time and allocated each year by the operator (this applies particularly to management models based on public funding). Maintenance and management costs must therefore be taken into account from the design phase and when selecting technical solutions and equipment.

FOCUS POINT 2 - TECHNICAL CHALLENGES:

What type of turf should you choose for a football stadium?

There are various different types of turf for football stadiums, each with varying costs, and their own advantages and disadvantages. While natural turf offers the best playing quality, its extremely high maintenance costs have led to the creation and use of various generations of synthetic turf (ranging from the first generation, which is now obsolete, to the fifth generation, or 5G, a hybrid turf containing a blend of natural and synthetic fibers). The table opposite summarizes the different advantages and disadvantages for each generation of turf. Note that the costs indicated represent general installation and maintenance costs in France, but may vary depending on the choice of brand, installation techniques, and local regulations.

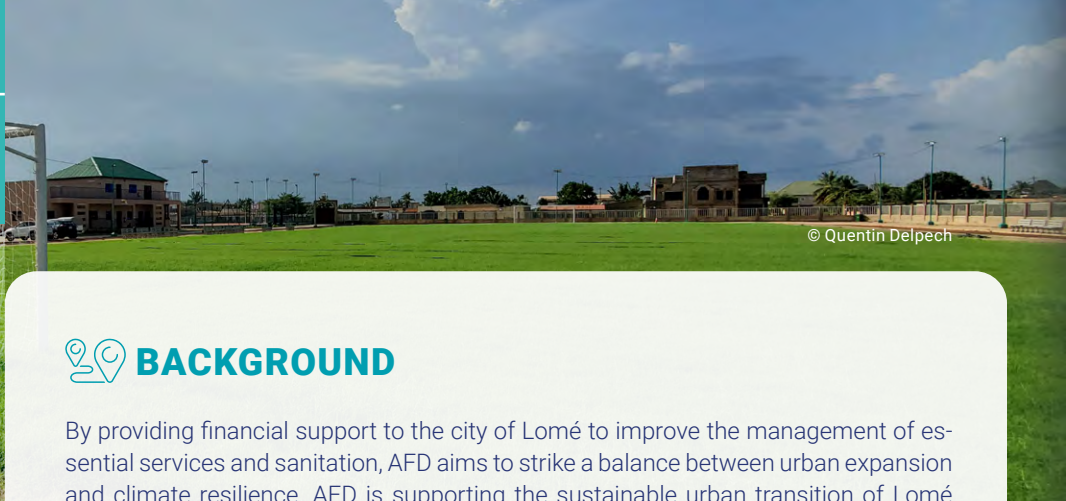


Type	Cost per square meter	Advantages	Disadvantages	Type of infrastructure
Standard natural turf	Installation: €30-€60/m ² Maintenance: €15-€25/m ² /year	Optimal playing quality (good shock absorption, pleasant for players to use, reduces the risk of injury)	- Very high maintenance costs (watering, mowing, fertilizing, reseeding) - Sensitive to climate conditions - Rapid deterioration with intensive use	- International - National - Regional
1st generation synthetic turf <i>Without infill</i> 	Installation: €20-€30/m ² Maintenance: €2-€5/m ² /year	- More environmentally friendly (less risk of plastic particle dispersal) - Low maintenance costs	- Poor playing quality: hard and abrasive surface - High risk of injury	- Local - School
2nd generation synthetic turf <i>Sand infill</i> 	Installation: €25-50/m ² Maintenance: €5-10/m ² /year	Low maintenance costs	Poor playing quality	- Local - School
3rd generation synthetic turf <i>Sand and aggregate infill</i> 	Installation: €80-100/m ² Maintenance: €5-10/m ² /year	- Good quality playing surface - Can be used all-year-round - Effective drainage	- Very high environmental and health costs if rubber granules are used (prioritize the use of cork) • /!\ • /!\ Not recommended if rubber or plastic granules are used - Regular maintenance costs: requires special expertise, which may lead to unexpected cost increases	- International - National - Regional - Schools and universities - Local
4th generation synthetic turf <i>Without infill</i> 	Installation: €100-130/m ² Maintenance: €3-6/m ² /year	- Requires less maintenance than 3G - More environmentally friendly - Improved playing comfort	Higher installation cost: requires special expertise for installation and maintenance, which may lead to unforeseen cost increases	- International - National - Regional
5th generation synthetic turf¹ <i>Hybrid natural and synthetic fibers</i> 	Installation: €60-120/m ² Maintenance: €5-10/m ² /year	- Low maintenance costs - Playing quality similar to natural turf - More durable and environmentally-friendly technology	Very high cost of installation	- International - National

¹ The term "5th generation synthetic turf" is not recognized by international bodies (FIFA, World Rugby, etc.). It is more of a commercial term that refers to recent innovations geared toward sustainability and environmental safety.

CASE STUDY

TOGO
PEUL III



BACKGROUND

By providing financial support to the city of Lomé to improve the management of essential services and sanitation, AFD aims to strike a balance between urban expansion and climate resilience. AFD is supporting the sustainable urban transition of Lomé through the implementation of three programs (PEUL I, II, and III)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Following on from the previous programs, the primary goal of PEUL III is to shut down a former uncontrolled landfill site in the city and to build waste transfer stations.

Alongside the main project, one of the program's other components involves the construction of three sports facilities in the municipalities of Kotokoli Zongo and Golfe 1 (Fourth Lake and Bè-Kpota neighborhoods).

One of the long-term objectives of this component is to leverage sports activities to raise awareness among local residents about proper waste management in their municipality.

ORGANIZATION

Landowner	Municipalities of Greater Lomé: Kotokoli Zongo and Golfe 1
Project Owner (PO)	Greater Lomé Autonomous District
Type of facility	2 football stadiums, 1 multisports facility
Structuring of the study phase	Completion of studies: • Preliminary design: French NGO (GRET) • Detailed Design: Local company (Betec) The studies were carried out late on in the process, highlighting the importance of preparatory work for each sports infrastructure project (geotechnical studies)
Structuring of the construction phase	Primary Contractor: Betec Urban and social project management: GRET Construction work carried out by local contractors
Structuring of the operational phase	16 months: February 2024 - June 2025
Cost per facility	€2.3 million for 3 facilities, including: • €100,000 for social and technical project management • €60,000 for Betec/€40,000 for GRET • €1 million: Kotokoli Zongo football stadium with natural turf • €600,000: football stadium in Bè-Kpota neighborhood with sand surface • €600,000: multisports facility in the Fourth Lake neighborhood with synthetic running track surface

Type of infrastructure



BENEFICIARY: Greater Lomé Autonomous District (DAGL)

PROJECT OWNER:
Greater Lomé Autonomous District

OPERATOR: To be determined

FINANCING: Grant

AMOUNT: €16.5 M, including €2.3 M for sport

PROJECT TIMELINE

PEUL III Program: program to improve waste management

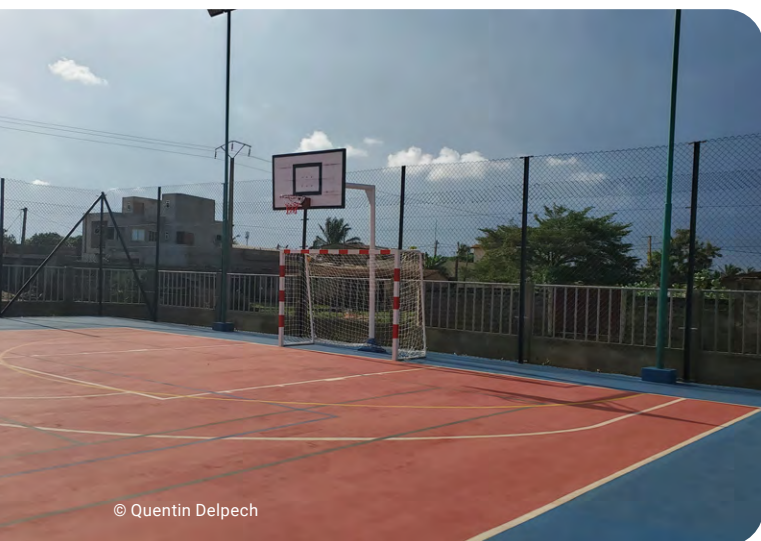
Construction of sports infrastructure: component 4 of the PEUL III program



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Best practices:

- ▶ **A sports facility is above all a type of infrastructure:** the failure to conduct in-depth technical feasibility studies during this project (particularly hydraulic and geotechnical studies) delayed the start of work and led to substantial cost overruns. This case study demonstrates that it is essential to approach the design of a sports facility as a type of infrastructure in itself. The geotechnical studies, site preparation works, drainage, and the main structural work are key phases, both for ensuring the quality of the structure and its durability.
- ▶ **Feasibility studies must be conducted:** for this project, site preparation works amounted to 50% of the overall cost, while the installation of drainage pipes accounted for 25% of the total budget. The particularly high costs of this work highlight the importance of proper planning and budgeting for these preparatory phases. Underestimating these expenses will inevitably lead to significant cost overruns.
- ▶ **A sports infrastructure project goes beyond the site boundaries:** it is essential to include the area surrounding the facility from the preliminary design (PD) phase. This approach ensures that accessibility and utility management issues are properly addressed (for example, connection to the nearest stormwater drainage system).
- ▶ **The specialized sport surfacing chosen must be suitable for the intended uses and within budget:** while synthetic turf ultimately reduces management costs, other options such as sand or natural turf (planned for use in this project) may prove equally suitable depending on user needs and the project owner's budget..



Recommendations :

- ▶ **Define the business model and management method during the initial phases of the project:** planning for these elements from the preliminary design (PD) phase will help you to make better-informed design choices, in line with the management capacities of the local authority or the future operator. This approach also makes it easier to clearly define the facility's uses, various target audiences and fee structure, which may include free access, while increasing the economic viability of the project.
- ▶ **Impose a strict set of conditions for future management:** to ensure the long-term viability of the facility, strict conditions precedent must be incorporated from the project structuring phase, that define the management model (direct management, delegated public service, etc.), the operating budget, the programming methods, and the pricing strategy. The failure to comply with the required conditions precedent during the PEUL III program prevented the implementation of a clear operational management model following the project handover. These conditions must therefore be formally defined, and compliance must be carefully monitored to ensure effective operation upon completion of the works.

1.4

Operational and legal structuring key to sports infrastructure projects

The contractual and operational framework for sports infrastructure should be considered from the start of the design phase. This means defining the distribution of roles, responsibilities, and risks between all the various public and private stakeholders involved, and determining the most appropriate and practical methods for the construction, management, and operation of the facility. This structuring process involves defining the institutional and legal framework under which the project will operate, and determining what type of facility is feasible, as well as making decisions on technical aspects (surface type, specific amenities), its effective operation, and long-term viability.

The business model should support this contractual framework: the financial and social viability of the project is assessed, as well as the stakeholders' capacity to manage the facility over the long term. These two aspects go hand in hand: the contractual framework is only relevant when based on a viable business model tailored to the local context.

Various project structuring plans may be considered, ranging from direct public management to hybrid models or public-private partnerships (PPPs). Their suitability depends on a number of key factors: appropriate size of the facility in relation to its level of use and operating costs, modular design of spaces to enable diverse uses, and a balanced distribution of risks and responsibilities among the partners.

This section explores the various legal and contractual structures available for each type of sports infrastructure, gives an overview of public-private partnership models, and presents alternative management models, such as community or association-based management. It also provides further insight on the potential involvement of Expertise France in infrastructure projects.



Project structuring:

Which operational, legal, and contractual model(s) should you choose?

INTRODUCTION

The structuring of sports infrastructure projects involves a series of key stages: from land acquisition and design, to the construction, management, and maintenance of the facility. At each phase, the project owner (PO) has several operational, legal, and contractual options available to organize the project's implementation, depending on (i) the financing strategy (donors, the government, private sector, etc.), (ii) the sharing of risks among the stakeholders potentially involved (iii) the technical complexity of the project, and (iv) the long-term management capacity of the public authorities.

Generally speaking, **there are many possible structuring options for the design, construction, and operation of sports infrastructure, involving three main categories of stakeholders: the site owner** (government, local authority or private stakeholder), **the operator** (who manages and maintains the facility) and **the end user** (clubs, schools, associations, event organizers).

100% public model: these roles can be taken on by a single entity, as with 100% public projects, where the government or a local authority serves as the project owner for the design and construction phases, as well as its direct operation. While this model ensures the facility remains under public control and is the most common in the countries where AFD Group operates for school and community facilities, it is becoming increasingly rare, particularly in cases where limited financial and human resources are available for the operating.

100% private model: at the other end of the spectrum, 100% private projects depend on private clubs, associations, or operators who finance, build, and operate the facilities themselves. This model is on the rise in some emerging countries, and is based on the assumption of sufficient economic capacities and viable operating prospects, even for small, local facilities (multisports facilities, school swimming pools, etc.). This approach therefore accounts for a small minority of projects financed by AFD Group and seems unlikely to become more widespread, except for large-scale national and international infrastructure projects.

There are numerous variations that lie between these two opposing approaches, such as public-private partnerships (PPPs), a type of contract where the public authority retains ownership of the land but the private partner is mandated with the design, construction, financing, management, and/or operation of the facility, with precisely defined distribution of risk, investment, and revenue.

WHICH TYPE OF CONTRACT IS REQUIRED BASED ON ITS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL VIABILITY?

The economic and social viability of a project depends on several key factors:

- ▶ **Correct sizing of the facility** in relation to its actual use and operating costs, based on detailed planning studies involving the project owner and users.
- ▶ **Modular design to accommodate mixed uses** (sports, school, cultural and social activities) based on a comparative analysis between the plans and the potential business model for the infrastructure.
- ▶ **Balanced distribution of responsibilities and risks between stakeholders** (investment, maintenance, operation, revenue collection) based on a detailed analysis of the resources of the project owner and all the other parties. This aspect is particularly important in countries where resources are limited, and where the lack of a clear business model and institutional capacity can compromise the long-term viability of the facility's operations. The revenue streams generated by a sports infrastructure, whether from ticket sales, rental of space, catering, or one-off events, must be in keeping with the local context, with the aim of maintaining technical standards (AFCON Africa Cup of Nations, for example, national sports federations) without significantly increasing operating costs.

1) Opting for a 100% public business model: PUBLIC CONTRACTS

In the case of sports infrastructure projects, 100% public contracts are based on a standard separation between the construction and operation phases, without direct private sector involvement in the financing or long-term management of the facility. In the design and construction phase, the local authority awards an **intellectual services contract** to conduct the studies (planning, contracting work) and then a **works contract** to construct the facility, in accordance with public tender regulations. Once the project has been delivered, the **management and operation** may be handled directly (by municipal services), or outsourced to a sports or socio-cultural **association** or a **local community** (as with the management framework for Urban Fabric Initiatives). An occupancy and management agreement is then established between both the local authority and the users (clubs, federations, etc.). Under this type of arrangement, the facility remains subject to public oversight, but the project owner is assumed to have the technical and financial resources required to finance the entire project using its own funds, and to ensure its day-to-day management.

2) Opting for a hybrid public-private business model: PPP CONTRACTS

Government-pays or concession contract?

A local authority with a large-scale facility (used on a regional scale) and significant institutional and financial capacities may enter into a **government pays PPP contract**. In such case, the public authority reimburses the private operator for its work (primarily the design or construction of the infrastructure, but potentially also management of the site) via a regular fixed lease payment, regardless of the risk related to the infrastructure's level of use. Conversely, a local authority that cannot afford to assume the risk of site use can delegate this responsibility to a private partner via a **PPP concession agreement**, stipulating that the private partner must generate remuneration directly from users (ticket sales, subscriptions, commercial concessions).

Thus, the final contractual structure chosen will have a direct impact on the economic viability of the public authority and the long-term management of the sports infrastructure, as well as on the site's accessibility to end users.

WHICH CONTRACT IS MOST SUITABLE FOR EACH TYPE OF SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE?

Choosing a business and legal model for a sports infrastructure project depends largely on the scale and level of use of the facility, as well as its impact on the area. **Local sports facilities** generally involve 100% public contracts, financed and managed directly by local authorities, as they provide a basic public service and do not have the potential to generate substantial profit. Conversely, PPP contracts are more commonly used for **regional facilities**, as they allow for the pooling of investment, the transfer of certain risks, and the structuring of business models that are partly based on operating revenue streams. Lastly, **national or international infrastructure projects** require more complex, often hybrid structures (public funding and private investment) and tend to involve more complex PPP contracts that meet the performance, attractiveness and visibility requirements associated with these major projects.



Examples for each type of infrastructure:

Paris Olympic Aquatics Centre France <i>National infrastructure</i>	During the design phase for the Paris Olympic Aquatics Centre (OAC), following a study conducted on the various potential contractual structures, the Greater Paris metropolitan area, the public authority leading the project, opted for a PPP concession agreement which covered: the design, construction, and operation of the OAC by a single private operator. Opting for a comprehensive contract makes it possible to: (i) reduce the time frame for procurement procedures compared to other contractual frameworks, (ii) reduce the risk of cost overruns in the event where the concessionaire becomes the primary contractor, and (iii) transfer future operational risks to the private operator from the design phase. However, this model requires a strict contractual framework and extensive public capacity to manage its implementation. Find out more: See Case Study – Paris Olympic Aquatics Centre
Euro 2016 football stadiums France <i>National and international infrastructure</i>	The construction and renovation of football stadiums to host Euro 2016 in France and their subsequent operation was structured in the form of a government-pays PPP. The private operator must design, build, and commission the stadium in line with UEFA (Union of European Football Associations) specifications and is then paid a special “Euro 2016” fee from the municipality in return. Alongside these arrangements and after the event, three categories of use were contractualized: (i) use of the stadium by the resident club for professional training and club matches, (ii) use for various events organized by the municipality, and (iii) use by the operator for commercial activities.
Koumassi Agora Côte d’Ivoire <i>Local sports facility</i>	A concession agreement was established for the operation of the Koumassi Agora, following a public tender for its design and construction. The operator of the Agora is responsible for generating revenue and maintaining the facility over the long term. The planned revenue streams include: (i) lease payments by businesses located on the site, (ii) revenue from advertising and sponsorship, (iii) the organization of sporting, cultural, or professional events, and (iv) the sale of membership cards to local residents. With its diverse range of financial operations, this model ensures economic profitability for the operator and the public authority while guaranteeing affordable pricing for users, but requires the local authority to actively monitor the private operator’s compliance with its obligations to avoid the risk of price hikes.. Find out more: See Case Study – Agora Program
Proville Program Tunisia <i>Local sports facility</i>	The design and construction of the sports facilities in the various targeted neighborhoods were managed directly by the Tunisian government, under the delegated project ownership of the Urban Rehabilitation and Renewal Agency (ARRU). Once the facilities were completed, the ARRU transferred ownership to the municipalities concerned, which are now responsible for their management and maintenance. Under this model, users can access these facilities free of charge or at reduced prices, but insufficient financial resources may be a risk for the infrastructure’s medium-and long-term viability. Find out more: See Case Study – PROVILLE Program
Urban Fabric Initiative in Dakar Senegal <i>Local sports facility</i>	The Urban Fabric Initiative in Dakar has adopted an original contractual framework, based on a participatory community approach. Projects are co-designed based on the needs of local residents, in collaboration with a group of stakeholders known as “UFI Operators”, who are responsible for developing concrete proposals to meet these needs. Construction work is carried out by local tradespeople. A management committee (MANCOM) made up of volunteers is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the sites, which includes planning activities, routine maintenance, and renting out these spaces for events. For example, the basketball court at the Pikine site can be rented out for dance classes or private ceremonies. This model allows for flexible local management tailored to the community’s needs. However, the long-term operation of these facilities may present challenges due to changes in structures and personnel. Find out more: See Case Study - Urban Fabric Initiative in Dakar

The table below summarizes the various legal and contractual project structuring models that can be adopted throughout the sports infrastructure project cycle, from a fully public model to solutions managed or co-financed by the private sector. The PO can choose from these various configurations to identify a structure that is consistent with the resources available, the capacities of local management, and the sport and social development aims of the infrastructure. The icons in the legend specify the most common types of contractual frameworks based on the type of sports infrastructure.



FIND OUT MORE:

- [Tool Sheet – Focus: Public-Private Partnerships in Sports Infrastructure Projects](#)
- [Tool Sheet – Focus: Management Model for Urban Fabric Initiatives](#)

	Public	Hybride – PPP model				Private
		PPP concession Agreement		Government-Pays PPP		
Land	Land/Public domain					Transfer of land/real estate
Design	Intellectual services contract for studies	Civil law ¹	Common law ²	Civil law	Common law	
Construction	Works contract	Design/Build Concession or Works Concession	DBFOM: Design – Build – Finance – Operate/Maintain BOO: Build – Own – Operate BO: Build – Operate DBFOMT: Design – Build – Finance – Operate/Maintain – Transfer BTO: Build – Operate – Transfer	Partnership contracts	DBFOM: Design – Build – Finance – Operate/Maintain DBFOMT: Design – Build – Finance – Operate/Maintain – Transfer BTO: Build – Transfer – Operate	Concession
Operation/maintenance	Direct state management	Association/Co-management	Service Concession Third-Party Management or Lease Contract			

Legend:

- Local and school facilities
- Regional infrastructure and university facilities
- National and international infrastructure

¹ See page 62

² See page 62



FOCUS POINT 1 - PROJECT STRUCTURING:

Public-Private Partnerships in sports infrastructure projects

REMINDER: TWO LEGAL FRAMEWORKS FOR TWO APPROACHES TO PUBLIC AND PPP CONTRACTS

Civil law or common law?

The legal and economic structuring of sports infrastructure projects varies depending on the legal framework of the country in which they are implemented, and particularly between common law and civil law systems.

Civil law refers to a framework of codified rules (such as the Civil Code or the Public Procurement Code) that strictly regulate contractual relationships. Conversely, common law is of Anglo-Saxon origin and is based primarily on case law, allowing for greater freedom of contract. This requires different approaches to public contracts and public-private partnerships (PPPs): under a common law system, PPP contracts are generally more flexible and detailed, and negotiated on a case-by-case basis, whereas under a civil law system, they must comply with a pre-established legal framework, with well-defined contract categories (public procurement, public service delegation, concession, etc.). These differences directly affect the legal structure, contractual risks, and financing mechanisms of projects.

Under civil law systems, the law distinguishes between several forms of contract based on the responsibilities placed on the private partner and the project phase in question. During the construction phase, a **works concession** requires that the concessionaire finances, designs, builds, and then operates the facility, while being remunerated primarily from its operation (for example, through ticket sales for a stadium or admission fees for a swimming pool). This model differs from a simple **design and build** contract, where the contractor is responsible for designing and constructing the facility, but not for its operation. Once the infrastructure has been built, it may be operated via a **service concession**: in this case, the concessionaire manages the facility for a specified period of time, at its own risk, and is remunerated through operating revenue. There are two particularly common approaches: a **lease contract** where the concessionaire receives direct revenue and pays a fee to the local authority, or a **third-party management agreement** where the operator is paid by the local authority, while also receiving a variable fee contingent on performance. A **partnership contract**, on the other hand, is a contract awarded to a private operator for a comprehensive mission that includes all or part of the financing, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of a public facility over a long period of time (often 20 to 30 years). Unlike a concession agreement, the operator is not remunerated through operating revenues from users, but rather through staggered public payments (government-pays PPP) made by

the contracting authority, which are often contingent on performance criteria.

Under the common law system, PPP-type contractual arrangements can also take various forms depending on the division of roles between the public and private stakeholders. With the **DBFOM** (Design-Build-Finance-Operate-Maintain) model, the private partner is responsible for the overall mission of designing, building, financing, operating, and maintaining the infrastructure for the duration of the contract, with the transfer of ownership at the end. The **DBFOM** model explicitly includes the transfer of ownership to the public authority, marking the end of the partnership. The **BOT** (Build-Operate-Transfer) model is fairly similar: the private company builds, operates, and then transfers the infrastructure to the public authority at the end of the concession agreement. With the **BTO** (Build-Transfer-Operate) model, the sequence is reversed: the private partner transfers ownership of the infrastructure to the public authority as soon as the construction work is complete, and then operates the facility under a separate contract. The **BOO** (Build-Own-Operate) model differs in that the private partner operates and retains ownership of the infrastructure, without any obligation to transfer ownership. Lastly, the **BO** (Build-Operate) model is a simplified version where the private partner builds and operates the infrastructure, without private financing or a planned transfer of ownership necessarily being involved.

WHY OPT FOR A PPP STRUCTURE?

A public-private partnership (PPP) is a contractual model where a public authority commissions a private operator for the design, construction, financing, management, and/or operation of a facility or public service for a specific and often long period of time relative to the infrastructure's lifecycle (15 to 30 years). The goal is for the private partners to provide investment and assume some or all of the risks associated with the project (financial, design/build, management, operational, regulatory, and legal risks), while the public authority retains strategic control and its responsibility towards users, as well as assuming all or part of these risks. Various types of PPP contractual arrangements can be used, depending on the public authority's capacity to assume the risks associated with the project.

To determine whether a PPP contract is appropriate for a sports infrastructure project, it is necessary to: (i) engage in dialogue with the project owner in order to understand their needs and establish a PPP arrangement from the project identification phase, and (ii) in addition to the feasibility studies, conduct an analysis of the legal framework and practices specific to the country in general and to the sector in particular.

This PPP planning and preparation procedure is essential to determine the most suitable structure for each project. To this end, the analysis carried out by a specialized consultant presents the most favorable cost/benefit analysis compared to other public procurement methods. Irrespective of the chosen structure and type of PPP, the aim is to optimize public resources as far as possible. It is important to emphasize that each structure must be considered within the context of local legal frameworks and best practices.



FIND OUT MORE:

- [Tool Sheet – Project Structuring: Which operational, legal, and contractual model\(s\) should you choose?](#)

LARGE-SCALE INFRASTRUCTURE: WHAT ARE THE KEY POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION WITH A PPP CONTRACT?

The use of public-private partnership (PPP) structures for infrastructure projects on a regional, national, or even international scale is fairly commonplace and may be appropriate for several reasons. PPP contracts are flexible and varied, thus enabling optimal risk distribution between the public and private sectors. However, if a PPP structure is selected during the project identification phase, there are four key points that require particular consideration:

1. Clearly identifying the various activities to be provided by the sports facility.
2. Clearly and precisely defining the assets included under the contract.
3. Diversifying revenue streams to ensure the long-term viability of the infrastructure and the associated activities.
4. Ensuring that the terms and conditions relating to major international sporting events (MISE) are incorporated into the contract.

1) Clearly identifying the various activities to be provided by the sports facility

Major sports infrastructure is generally multifunctional, accommodating a diverse range of both sports and non-sporting activities (conferences, conventions, cultural and other social events). Commercial and hotel services may also be provided in ancillary buildings under the contract.

The contract must therefore list, define, and describe all the activities to be carried out within all the facilities within its scope, and distinguish between public service activities and commercial activities.

2) Clearly and precisely defining the assets included under the contract

National sports infrastructure is generally used as leverage to incorporate additional assets into the scope of the contract, with a view to attracting a wider audience in addition to users and spectators, enhancing the value of the facilities, and increasing the site's attractiveness. To achieve this, it is important that **the list of assets included within the scope of the contract maximizes the project's impact, in terms of the public procurement objectives** (for example, by prioritizing varied and multifunctional facilities to reach a broader proportion of the population).

3) Diversifying revenue streams to ensure the long-term viability of the infrastructure and the associated activities

The revenue streams generated by the various commercial activities serve both as a source of repayment and project financing for the public authority and its partner. These revenue streams will differ between the two contracting parties depending on the specific PPP contract involved. For example, under a government-pays PPP contract, the public authority must pay regular lease payments to the private operator to reimburse them for completed or ongoing services (if the operator is operating the facility). In this case, the profits made from commercial activities are shared between the public authority and the private partner, thus allowing the public authority to reduce the lease payments. Under a concession agreement, the private operator generates remuneration directly from the operation of the sports infrastructure (ticket sales, membership fees). If the fees paid by users do not reflect the actual cost of the service, then the public authority may pay compensation to the private operator, unless the revenue generated through commercial activities offsets this shortfall. Naming rights¹ (i.e. where a company attaches its name to the sports infrastructure in exchange for an annual financial fee) is also an increasingly popular source of revenue for public authorities. In each case, the difficulty lies in using the various commercial revenue streams of the contract holder to reduce the project cost for the contracting authority and to optimize the use of the infrastructure.

¹ Naming rights: "attaching the name of a company to a stadium in exchange for a lump sum payment or an annual contribution." ([Commission Report, "Grands stades Euro 2016", p. 47](#)). "The aim of this form of sponsorship is to give a building or facility designed for public use the name of a commercial brand, by providing the brand owner with specific commercial services (sponsorship rights, public relations services, etc.) in exchange for the payment of a fee." (Explanatory memorandum to draft project for the 2015 DJS 274 Palais Omnisports de Paris-Bercy (12th arrondissement) – Approval of sponsor and new name of the POPB).

4) Incorporating the terms and conditions relating to major international sporting events (MISE) into the contract

If the national infrastructure is being built or renovated to host a major international sporting event (MISE), the PPP contract must include a specific section on the requirements for the event's organization. This section of the contract must distinguish between three distinct phases:

- ▶ a pre-MISE phase of non-exclusive use of the infrastructure by the MISE organizer for visits (to check the state of readiness of the infrastructure and the site, for example), access (for example, for athletes to familiarize themselves with the site or for training purposes), checks, testing, works, etc.;
- ▶ a MISE phase of exclusive use of the infrastructure during which it is fully available to the MISE organizer;
- ▶ a legacy planning phase to make optimal use of the infrastructure after the event and reduce the risk of underutilization.

The challenge is therefore to ensure compliance with the MISE specifications, particularly by explicitly defining the terms of availability of the infrastructure during the MISE, and the legacy phase.

FOCUS

Contractual recommendations for an infrastructure project involving a major international sporting event (MISE)

Comply with the specific technical requirements imposed by the MISE organizer: if the infrastructure is being delivered for the MISE, provide an initial configuration that meets the technical requirements (exceptional hosting capacity, international standards). If the infrastructure will be used before the MISE, provide a configuration that meets the necessary technical requirements and standards.

Contractual provisions for use of the infrastructure during the MISE:

- ▶ Define the periods of exclusive and non-exclusive availability/use of the infrastructure by the MISE organizer in accordance with the MISE specifications.
- ▶ Specify these periods in the contract in accordance with the MISE specifications (generally short and fixed periods of time). A matrix should be produced to define the distribution of responsibilities between the infrastructure operator and the MISE organizer, and in particular, the services to be provided by the operator and the reimbursement of its operational expenses (for example, sanitation or security services).
- ▶ Where applicable, provide for compensation related to the costs of configuring and making the infrastructure available by the contract holder to meet the MISE specifications.

Legacy phase: define a configuration for the "legacy phase" of the infrastructure by the contract holder.

ARE PPPs SUITABLE FOR LOCAL SPORTS FACILITIES?

While PPPs are particularly suited to large-scale sports infrastructure, due to the complexity of projects and the diverse range of revenue streams that can be generated, these characteristics are not necessarily associated with local sports facilities.

Using PPPs for local sports facilities can have a number of drawbacks, including:

- ▶ the significant cost and time involved in preparing and awarding tenders for projects compared to their low returns;
- ▶ the lack of capacity of the contracting authorities, which are typically local authorities;
- ▶ with regard to the two previous points, the complexity of contracts entered into for a significant period of time which involve lengthy and detailed discussions on certain clauses (for example, those relating to financing), whereas the construction and maintenance of local sports facilities should be relatively simple;
- ▶ similarly, the complexity of the tendering process (for example, the assessment of bidders' financial proposals which are based on estimates).

Public procurement contracts are generally the preferred option when it comes to the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of these facilities. However, beyond the usual benefits associated with the use of PPPs, a typical PPP contract does offer the following advantages:

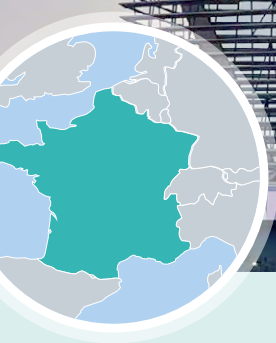
- ▶ **private sector expertise and know-how in infrastructure management** to optimize use and better coordinate the various users (clubs, associations, schools, etc.) when awarding contracts for the provision of these facilities and planning for different uses and opening times;
- ▶ **the assurance of meeting performance-related targets** in the case of government-pays PPPs;
- ▶ **the private sector's capacity for innovation to generate commercial revenue streams;**
- ▶ **the option to award the entire project to the contract holder** and incorporate their management and operating plan from the design stage, thus reducing costs;
- ▶ **the transfer of knowledge from the private sector** through obligations stipulated in the contract covering the entire project cycle.



CASE STUDY

FRANCE

Paris Olympic Aquatics Centre



BACKGROUND

The Paris Olympic Aquatics Centre (OAC) is part of a wider urban development project in the Plaine Saulnier area north of Paris, resulting from a consultation process launched in 2018.

The only sports infrastructure built for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, the OAC is unique in that it will remain in place after the event, thus leaving behind a major Olympic legacy, both in terms of urban development—with the pedestrian bridge—and sport.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

During the Olympic Games, the OAC was used to host the diving, water polo, and synchronized swimming events. The other swimming events, requiring a greater capacity than needed in the legacy phase, were held in a temporary pool built in the Paris La Défense Arena in Nanterre.

This site was chosen for its strategic location, due to its close proximity to the Olympic and Paralympic Village, its easy accessibility by both public transport and road, and also because of the vibrancy of the urban neighborhoods on the outskirts of Paris and Seine-Saint-Denis.

In the legacy phase after the Olympic Games, this Olympic infrastructure will become a local sports facility managed by a consortium of private companies under a concession management model.



ORGANIZATION

Landowner	Greater Paris Metropolitan Area
Project Owner	Greater Paris Metropolitan Area
Type of facility	• Facilities that meet international standards: Olympic swimming pool • Local sports facilities: local swimming pool and private sports facilities
Structuring of the study, construction, and operational phases	Concession-type structure (with pre-financing and risk transfer to the winning bidder) including the design, construction, and technical operation of the aquatics center and the pedestrian bridge. The winning consortium has formed a project company.
Structuring for the provision of the public service	Concession model for the entire site, with occupancy agreements for “non-aquatic” sports and leisure activities
Cost per facility	Olympic Aquatics Centre + Pedestrian Bridge €175 million (including €25 million for the bridge alone)

Type of infrastructure

I/N	R	L	D
-----	---	---	---

BENEFICIARY:

Commune of Saint-Denis

PROJECT OWNER:

Greater Paris Metropolitan Area

OPERATOR:

Olympic Games Phase: OCOG

Legacy Phase: SIMBALA

FINANCING: Public

(Government – Region – Commune)

PROJECT TIMELINE



PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Infrastructure as part of a wider urban development project

The Olympic Aquatics Centre forms part of a comprehensive urban redevelopment plan, including the creation of a pedestrian bridge linking the Stade de France to the Plaine Saulnier district, to open up the Pleyel district of Saint-Denis. This footbridge aims to provide multiple transport links, with connections to the RER D station “Stade de France – Saint-Denis”, metro line 13, and the Grand Paris Express station “Saint-Denis Pleyel”. During busy periods, this crossing can accommodate up to 8,000 pedestrians per hour. Designed to be a true living space, it incorporates areas for culture, sport, and quiet contemplation, with comfortable public spaces suitable for organizing events and activities. This bridge is both an engineering structure and a building that accommodates offices, leisure activities, and urban sports.

An architectural project certified as an “NF HQE Sports Facility” for its exceptional environmental quality

The aquatics center has been designed according to various environmental principles:

- modular pool design for optimal management of energy and water resources;
- prioritized use of bio-based materials;
- optimal size of the hall to be heated thanks to its concave roof;
- photovoltaic panels installed on part of the roof, meeting 25% of the building’s electricity needs.

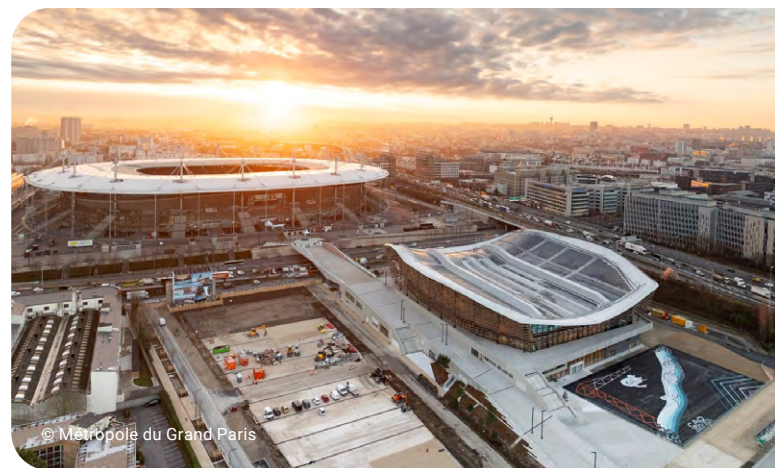
KEY TAKEAWAYS

Best practices:

- ▶ **Incorporation of sports facilities into a wider urban development project:** the construction of the Olympic Aquatics Centre has contributed to the redevelopment of the Plaine Saulnier district and helped open up the Pleyel district with the pedestrian crossing linked to the Stade de France.
- ▶ **A design centered around legacy planning:** the Olympic Aquatics Centre was designed primarily for use after the Olympics, while also meeting the requirements of the Olympic Games.
- ▶ **Reduced inequalities in access to sports facilities:** this project aims to address the lack of sports infrastructure in Seine-Saint-Denis, and particularly swimming pools.

Sports infrastructure designed for the local community

Although this center was built for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, its primary purpose, once the Games are over, is to serve as an aquatics center accessible to local residents in Seine-Saint-Denis. In particular, it is a place where local school-children can learn to swim.



- ▶ **Concession management model:** the contracting authority stated that, following a study of the various potential contractual arrangements, a PPP concession agreement was justified for the following reasons:
 1. Due to time constraints and durability requirements, the decision was made to avoid structures that required the award of several contracts (a primary contractor contract alongside construction and operation contracts, or a build-operate contract) and rather to opt for a single, comprehensive contract. This framework reduces the time required for procurement procedures to award multiple contracts, as well as the risk of cost overruns, particularly if the concessionaire takes over as the primary contractor, assuming that the contracting work would be carried out through a public tender process.
 2. The contracting authority opted for a concession agreement to outsource the design and build of the infrastructure and the operation of the associated public service, thus allowing:
 - the concessionaire’s operating plan to be incorporated from the design stage with a view to optimizing this plan;
 - the operating risk to be assigned to the concessionaire.

CASE STUDY

CÔTE D'IVOIRE Agora Program



Type of infrastructure



BENEFICIARY: Government of Côte d'Ivoire

PROJECT OWNER: Ministry of Sports

OPERATION: Winwin Afrique

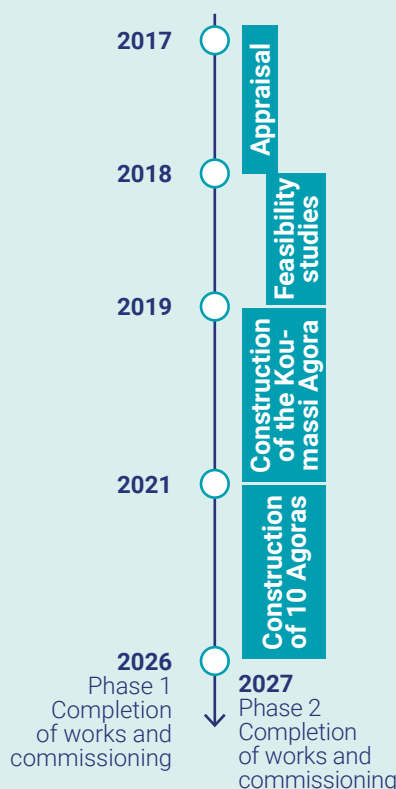
FINANCING: Koumassi Agora: €800,000 grant (Private Sector Study and Aid Fund- FASEP), €700,000 construction (State of Côte d'Ivoire)

10 Agoras:

Phase 1: €27 million, loan from the French Treasury

Phase 2: €20 million, loan from the French Treasury and Bpifrance

PROJECT TIMELINE



BACKGROUND

The National Sport Policy (PNS) was adopted in Côte d'Ivoire in June 2017. One of the six components of the PNS is the "Program to Support the Promotion of Grassroots Sports and Sport for All" (PAPMAS). As a result, in June 2017, the Ministry of Sports commissioned Winwin Afrique (WWA) to support the implementation of PAPMAS.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project's stated objective is to create 91 local sports facilities across the country.

To this end, WWA developed the Agora program, aiming to address two specific issues: the difficulty of securing funding solely from the government to construct sports facilities, and the challenge of developing 100% private programs for disadvantaged populations. The program comprises four key components:

- 1. Construction:** constructing and maintaining 91 modular, net-zero energy, multifunctional local facilities.
- 2. 2Use:** developing a structured social ecosystem around the project, with a focus on accessibility for women and young people. Within these complexes, distinct spaces are created to address specific social challenges: health, social innovation, and sustainable development.
- 3. Operation:** the private operator (in this case, WWA) is responsible for the long-term operation of the program.
- 4. Training:** at the same time, a training company was created to provide training in the management of sports and cultural infrastructure.

ORGANIZATION

Landowner	Public: State-owned
Project Owner (PO)	Ivorian Ministry of Sports Delegated Project Owner Winwin Afrique
Type of facility	91 agoras: multifunctional complexes: • Sports: football, basketball, handball, maracanã football, running track, gymnasium, fitness trail and gym • Cultural activities: stages for music or theater • Commercial activities: leasing of office and commercial space, sponsorship and partnerships
Structuring of the study phase	Studies and construction of the demonstrator carried out by Winwin Afrique, financed through an FASEP grant Replication for 10 agoras constructed by the consortium Winwin Afrique/ALAMO
Structuring of the construction phase	Abidjan Sustainable City Club: French association of 97 companies
Structuring of the operational phase	Winwin Afrique is responsible for the maintenance of the center which it operates through a public service delegation The agora's operation is self-financed through several revenue streams: business leases, sponsorship, events, admission fees
Cost per facility	Koumassi Agora: €3.5 million Construction phase for 10 agoras: between €2.7 million and €5 million per agora depending on the site

Key figures on the four agoras already being operated by WinWin

650,000
visitors per year

27,000
schoolchildren per week

70,000 participants
in the agoras' social impact activities

90 tons
of plastic waste collected



KEY TAKEAWAYS

The first agora in Koumassi:

Constructed over 16 months in Koumassi, the first agora was inaugurated on December 21, 2019.

- **Brief description of the agora:** The Koumassi agora is located within the Koumassi sports complex, owned by the National Sports Office (ONS), the entity responsible for managing infrastructure on behalf of the Ministry of Sports of Côte d'Ivoire. Located in the heart of Koumassi, a district of Abidjan with many shops and businesses and a population of over 430,000, the Koumassi sports complex has been fully renovated and is equipped with a football and rugby pitch measuring 144 meters by 68 meters, 2 basketball courts, and 2 handball courts. Covering an area of over 3 hectares, and surrounded by a 3-meter-high fence, it can accommodate a large audience (more than 5,000 people for events). It is easily accessible and has approximately fifty parking spaces.
- **Collaborative project between France and Côte d'Ivoire:** an FASEP¹ grant was awarded to finance the Agora program and the construction of the Koumassi Agora as a pilot project, with the participation of the Ivorian Ministry of Sports, which provided the site and oversaw the civil engineering and development work on-site. In addition to the FASEP agreement, on June 28, 2018, a cooperation contract was signed between the French Ministry of the Economy and Finance, the Ivorian Ministry of Sports, and WWA, with the aim of managing and supporting the roll-out of the Agora program to construct local sports facilities. The purpose of this agreement was to ensure continuity after the FASEP agreement reached its term, particularly for the construction, operating plan, and replication of the Agora program.
- **An energy-efficient building:** a solar power station has been installed on the roof of the building, making it energy self-sufficient through daily programming.
- **On-site waste sorting facilities:** a waste sorting and recycling facility has been installed. Residents of Koumassi can bring and sell their plastic waste, which is compacted on-site and then sent to waste treatment centers.
- **A diverse range of cultural, sporting, and commercial activities:** while primarily a sports complex, the Koumassi agora is also a cultural venue where concerts and festivals are held. Sections of the perimeter wall have been reserved for street artists to show off their talents. There are several businesses on-site, providing visitors with numerous services: food/snacks, prepaid card sales, beauty products, and various other stores.

- **The Agora ecosystem: Three main types of partners:**

- Social organizations leading social innovation, sustainable development, and health programs;
- Sports associations that use the available playing fields;
- Economic stakeholders who open stores or enter into sponsorship partnerships with the operating company.

- **The use of a PPP structure:** after a public contract was entered into for the design and construction of the agora, a public service delegation was concluded on December 9, 2019 for its operation. The contract defines the scope of the delegated activities and the public service obligations of the contract holder. The Koumassi Agora generates revenue and profit which are used to maintain the infrastructure over the long term, but has also adopted a social model, and promotes sports participation for all. The operator can generate revenue through the following streams:

- lease payments collected from stakeholders in the Agora ecosystem;
- revenue from advertising and sponsorship;
- cultural, sporting, and professional events held on the site.

Since 2020, the agora model has been replicated across Abidjan and in the provinces:

The French Treasury Department granted a loan of approximately €27 million (18 billion CFA francs) to the government of Côte d'Ivoire on August 18, 2020, to finance the replication of this model and construct ten additional agoras.

The Ministry of Sports and WWA, in partnership with the company ALAMO, signed a public contract on May 15, 2021, valuing €27 million, to design and construct ten new agoras which will be operated under a PPP concession agreement. Ten sites have been selected for this first phase of the replication plan: four in the Abidjan district and six across the country. The communes concerned are: Abobo, Yopougon, Port-Bouët, Béoumi, Dimbokro, Guiglo, Dabou, Touba, Songon, and Boundiali. Four agoras will be operational by 2025, four will be completed by 2026, and three by 2027.

Additional funding of €20.9 million has been allocated to support existing infrastructure and provide the provincial sites with facilities comparable to those in Abidjan, so that standard business models can be implemented.

¹ Private Sector Study and Aid Fund

FOCUS POINT 2 - PROJECT STRUCTURING:

Management Model for Urban Fabric Initiatives

CHALLENGES OF MANAGING AN URBAN FABRIC INITIATIVE

Stakeholders

Urban Fabric Initiatives are implemented by a **“UFI Operator**, who is responsible for the design and construction of these facilities. This third-party actor serves as the liaison between local residents and public authorities, and draws on a broad range of expertise to ensure the project’s successful completion. Unlike the project owners of projects typically financed by AFD Group, the UFI Operator’s role inevitably comes to an end once the financing period is over. Therefore, a crucial part of their role is to **support users and the local authority** in establishing a long-term management solution.

What are the challenges of management?

A sports facility associated with an Urban Fabric Initiative (see Tool Sheet – Sports facilities delivered by Urban Fabric Initiatives) is managed at different levels, with particular emphasis on:

- ▶ **Defining the rules for site access and use.**
For example: is the space going to be freely accessible or will access be controlled? What are the opening hours? What uses are permitted on the site?
- ▶ **Site supervision:** defining schedules and allocating time slots, resolving conflicts, and managing potential revenue.
- ▶ **Routine site maintenance:** such as regular cleaning, collection of solid waste, clearing of drains, and occasional repairs.
- ▶ **Maintenance work:** including repairs in the event of serious damage and implementation of the maintenance plan.

Risks and limitations

Managers may be tempted to keep adding simple and modest improvements to attract as many local residents as possible. However, **these types of facilities**, which tend to be constructed quickly, **are associated with a higher risk of rapid deterioration and significant maintenance costs**. This is particularly true in the case of sports facilities that are constructed through a collaborative approach, as they are usually very popular and subject to overuse because of the lack of facilities in these neighborhoods.

Moreover, Urban Fabric Initiatives provide facilities in public spaces that aim to be as inclusive as possible. As a result, **reconciling this social mission with a business model based on paid access** can prove difficult. Two potential options are available:

1. Incorporating the facility delivered by the Urban Fabric Initiative into the local authority’s operating and maintenance plan: this option can be complex insofar as public authorities often struggle to collect taxes.
2. Developing revenue streams at the site to help finance the operation and maintenance of the sports facility: paid time slots, rental of the sports field for events, or refreshment stands that pay a fee.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES (MANCOM)

Urban Fabric Initiatives work on the assumption that **involving users in site management increases their long-term viability**. When users take greater ownership of sites and have more responsibility for them, they often adopt behaviors that promote longer durability (fewer instances of misuse, more accepting of decisions, faster repairs, etc.). Once the facility has been delivered, the Urban Fabric Initiative establishes a management framework for collaborative decision-making between users and public authorities. This requires the **establishment of a MANCOM**, which takes various forms depending on the site.

SOME EXAMPLES OF HOW A MANCOM OPERATES

- ▶ **Status:** formal association with a chairperson/treasurer/secretary, or an informal group.
- ▶ **Responsibilities:** management of schedules, overseeing health and safety for the facility, monitoring compliance with the rules of use, managing sports equipment and routine repairs, etc.
- ▶ **Composition:** prominent local figures with a certain degree of authority, representatives of the community and various sporting disciplines (associations or individual users), etc.
- ▶ **Appointment process:** committee elected by local residents or appointed by the local authority.

CASE STUDY

TUNISIA

Urban Fabric Initiative in Tunis



Terrain multisport, commune de Béja, 2024
© HI Tunisie



BACKGROUND

The Urban Fabric Initiative in Tunis is aligned with the wider implementation of national programs to rehabilitate and reintegrate low-income residential neighborhoods, financed by AFD as part of the PROVILLE program (see Case Study on the Provile Program - Tunisia). This project aims to improve social inclusion for local residents in the program's beneficiary neighborhoods, by developing micro-projects to organize social, sports, and cultural activities in the public spaces of these communities.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Urban Fabric Initiative in Tunis has been divided into two phases:

- Phase 1 concerns projects implemented in Greater Tunis and Gabès;
- Phase 2 is focused on projects in the city of Béja.



ORGANIZATION

Type of infrastructure

I/N	R	L	D
-----	---	---	---

BENEFICIARY: Cities of Tunis, Gabès, and Béja

PROJECT OWNER: Urban Rehabilitation and Renewal Agency

OPERATOR: Local associations

FINANCING MECHANISM: Grant

AMOUNT:

Phase 1: €950,000

Phase 2: €425,000

AFD DIVISION: Urban Development, Planning, and Housing

PROJECT TIMELINE

November 2018

June 2022

October 2023

Phase 1: Urban Fabric Initiative in Greater Tunis and Gabès

Phase 2: Urban Fabric Initiative in Béja

Landowner	Public land (belonging to the State or the municipality depending on the site)
Operated by the "UFI Operator" implementing the project	Handicap International/Humanité et Inclusion (Lead operator) Lab'ess (incubator for SSE businesses) and Kandeel (engineering consulting firm)
Type of facility	Greater Tunis: • Construction of changing rooms for the football pitch (Oued Ellil) • Street workout area (Sidi Hassine) Gabès: • Pilot school playing field (Sidi Rached – Chenini): laying of turf, creation of an athletics track and accessibility for people with reduced mobility • AGIM gym (Cité Chobben – Metouia) • Park for women and children with a sports area and a playground (Mohammed Ali – Gabès) • Street workout area (Zouida – Ghannouch) • Ouedhref fitness trail (Khayreddine – Ouedhref) Béja: renovation of the multisports facility at the Avenue Bourguiba school
Structuring of the study phase	Participatory area assessment by zone conducted by Kandeel and launch of a call for projects led by associations
Structuring of the construction phase	Project Owner: associations that won the tenders, which recruit construction companies with support from the "UFI Operator"
Structuring of the operational phase	The associations that won the tenders are responsible for managing the facility.
Cost per city	Greater Tunis: • Construction of changing rooms for the football pitch (Oued Ellil): €18,000 • Street workout area (Sidi Hassine): €2,900 Gabès: • Pilot school playing field (Sidi Rached – Chenini): laying of turf, creation of an athletics track and accessibility for people with reduced mobility: €10,000 • AGIM gym (Cité Chobben – Metouia): €9,300 • Park for women and children with a sports area and a playground (Mohammed Ali – Gabès): €9,700 • Street workout area (Zouida – Ghannouch): €9,700 • Ouedhref fitness trail (Khayreddine – Ouedhref): €10,900 Béja: €13,500 per urban initiative (project requiring extensive technical and financial support)



© HI Tunisie

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Mobilizing civil society in neighborhoods targeted by the PROVILLE program

Launched in 2018, this first Urban Fabric Initiative served as a pilot project for the program. The PROVILLE program, which finances the development of urban infrastructure (roads, drainage systems, community facilities, etc.), implemented this Urban Fabric Initiative in Tunis to support associations working on the ground to revitalize local neighborhoods. By supporting micro-projects (development of public spaces, funding for artistic or sporting activities and events), this initiative encourages local residents to take greater ownership of the infrastructure constructed by the PROVILLE program.

Mobilizing local residents through calls for micro-projects

The decision was made to launch a call for micro-projects to encourage residents (individuals) and civil society organizations (CSOs) to become more involved in the process of revitalizing and breathing life into the city. These projects are tailored directly to the needs of local residents, and thus provide targeted solutions more quickly than the infrastructure projects implemented by the PROVILLE program. In contrast to other initiatives that take longer to implement and rely on technical and financial support, micro-projects can be delivered over a shorter time frame and on a smaller scale in specific urban districts. These projects aim to address the same issues and therefore work in complement with broader initiatives. Due to the number of sports associations involved, micro-projects were prioritized to avoid the need for UFI Operators to raise substantial financing.

Meeting needs on a micro level within the framework of a national urban regeneration program

The PROVILLE program operates in over 160 neighborhoods across Tunisia, where it finances the construction of major infrastructure. The impact of this type of program is easy to assess at the national level based on how much infrastructure is built, and particularly sports facilities. However, it is more difficult to assess the impact of a sports facility on a micro level, i.e. Who is using it? Which stakeholders are responsible for its operation and maintenance? Does it host events that promote sport participation? The Urban Fabric Initiative works on a much smaller scale, thus enabling the PROVILLE program to implement targeted actions at all levels based on feedback from the field.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Best practices:

- ▶ **Addressing women's specific needs:** the participatory area assessment (PAR) conducted in Gabès revealed a demand for sports facilities for women: the Mohammed Ali neighborhood park was therefore created to meet this need. This participatory approach made it easier to identify specific local needs.
- ▶ **Mobilizing the community through sporting events:** involving residents in the organization of sports and cultural activities helps compensate for the limited choice of leisure activities and improve quality of life in the neighborhood.

Recommendations :

- ▶ **Focus on improving the technical design of facilities** to ensure they are fit for purpose after completion. For example: provide adequate lighting and access to water in sports facilities, and construct changing rooms.
- ▶ **Adapt the consultation process during the design phase in line with the available budget** to avoid raising expectations and ensure users are realistic about what the project will deliver.
- ▶ **Develop the technical expertise of governance members for projects led by associations** to ensure the durability of infrastructure and prevent safety issues, such as the use of unsecured equipment.
- ▶ **Ensure better coordination between the Urban Fabric Initiative and the PROVILLE project to improve the long-term viability of facilities**, while consistently incorporating these spaces into a long-term strategy.
- ▶ **Reduce the number of micro-projects supported** to dedicate more human and financial resources to project implementation and thus ensure that facilities are sustainable over the longer term (over 50 micro-projects supported).

CASE STUDY

TUNISIA PROVILLE



© Amine Landoulsi / AFD

BACKGROUND

The PROVILLE program (or PRIQH – Program for the Rehabilitation and Integration of Residential Areas) aims to improve the living conditions of Tunisian people in disadvantaged urban areas by providing better access to basic services and reducing socioeconomic marginalization. The program is part of a strategy to reduce social inequalities by targeting the poorest urban communities, as well as tackling regional inequalities, since the program is primarily focused on the country's interior regions. Its goals are as follows:

- contribute to reducing disparities in basic urban infrastructure (particularly roads, water and sanitation, and public lighting);
- promote social and local development by constructing social and economic facilities for communities in disadvantaged neighborhoods (particularly sports facilities);
- develop tools and mechanisms for comprehensive and coherent action to revitalize urban areas.

This program was implemented based on an initial financing phase from 2013 to 2022 (PRIQH 1) and a second phase was then approved (2017-2025, PRIQH 2). It is led by the Urban Rehabilitation and Renewal Agency (ARRU) as the delegated project owner.

Type of infrastructure



BENEFICIARY: Municipalities

PROJECT OWNER:

Central: Government of Tunisia

Delegated project owner: ARRU

OPERATOR: Municipalities (primarily)

AFD FINANCING MECHANISM:

PRIQH 1: €30 million loan + €0.3 million grant

PRIQH 2: €77 million loan

AFD DIVISION: Urban Development, Planning, and Housing

PROJECT TIMELINE

PRIQH1 and PRIQH2



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The sports aspect of the program is aligned with the objectives of the urban regeneration program. Various types of infrastructure are being developed, such as local sports fields, cultural and sports complexes, and individual gyms.

ORGANIZATION

Landowner	Public land: Tunisian government through the Ministry of State Domains before transfer of ownership to the Municipalities
Type of facility	PROVILLE 1 – phase involving the development of community social facilities which resulted in: • the construction of 52 multi-purpose sports facilities (individual gyms, sports and cultural complexes, leisure parks, libraries, youth centers) - 10% of the budget (over €3 million); • the development of 47 local sports fields – less than 2% of the budget (around €400,000). PROVILLE 2 – phase to develop community social facilities involving: • the construction of 46 multi-purpose sports facilities (individual gyms, sports and cultural complexes, leisure parks, libraries, youth centers) – 7.6% of the budget (€18.8 million).
Structuring of the study phase	Managed directly by the Urban Rehabilitation and Renewal Agency (ARRU)
Structuring of the construction phase	Primary Contractor: ARRU, then transfer to the municipalities
Structuring of the operational phase	Various management models have been adopted during the operational phase for sports infrastructure of all types: • the majority are managed directly by the municipalities after transfer of ownership of the infrastructure; • in exceptional cases, facilities are managed by the Ministry of Sports through its regional representative, or through delegated management via a lease contract.
Cost per facility	From €6,000 for a local sports field to €1 million for a sports and cultural complex



PROJECT DELIVERABLES

The development of sports infrastructure is fully aligned with the overall objectives of the PROVILLE program.

- ▶ **Contribute to reducing disparities in basic urban infrastructure:** as with the program's other components, sports infrastructure is being constructed to make up for the short-falls identified in the areas concerned, particularly in terms of local facilities. The sports component of PRIQH1 is focused on addressing this lack of infrastructure, and thus improving quality of life for local residents.
- ▶ **Promote social and local development:** sports infrastructure is central to this approach, as these facilities constitute social hubs for communities. They serve as a place for residents to meet and socialize, while providing local associations with a suitable space to organize activities. As a result, their use helps foster social cohesion and support community development.
- ▶ **Contribute to the development of coherent tools and mechanisms for revitalizing urban areas:** as an integral part of the urban fabric, sports infrastructure helps to shape neighborhoods. These facilities are part of a wider comprehensive urban regeneration program, promoting coordinated and sustainable action to develop the areas concerned.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Best practices:

- ▶ **Developing hybrid operating models with private stakeholders.** Certain facilities are run by private operators, which improves their operation and ensures regular maintenance. However, these initiatives are few and far between and could be expanded for more effective management.

Recommendations :

- ▶ **Tailor** the design of infrastructure to its intended uses and target users to meet the specific needs of each community, while avoiding a one-size-fits-all approach across various regions.
- ▶ **Secure** land rights from the early stages of the project to avoid delays related to the transfer of land ownership and ensure infrastructure is fully operational and commissioned on time.
- ▶ **Plan the management and financing models in advance** for the upkeep and maintenance of infrastructure, by allocating a specific budget to prevent rapid deterioration and ensure its long-term durability.
- ▶ **Ensure optimal** accessibility of infrastructure by improving lighting, increasing visibility for school groups, and adapting opening hours to allow for maximum use of facilities.
- ▶ **Actively involve** the Ministry of Sports and local stakeholders from the first stages of sports infrastructure projects to ensure effective governance, the provision of necessary equipment, and the smooth operation of the site.

PART 2



SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE ALIGNED WITH THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS





More than a simple leisure activity, sport is a powerful driver of social, territorial, and economic change. In the UN's 2030 Agenda, sport is recognized as a strategic enabler of social cohesion, public health, education, and resilience, which contributes to achieving twelve of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

With sedentary lifestyles a growing concern, sport plays a central role in health and well-being. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), regular physical activity reduces the risk of premature death by 20 to 30%.¹ However, sport's positive impact goes far beyond that: it promotes learning and gender equality, strengthens bonds between generations, and contributes to the building of more inclusive cities. Sports infrastructure helps shape neighborhoods and foster social ties between local residents. It must be designed to withstand the effects of climate change in order to limit their impact, particularly through sustainable-design and efficient management of resources.

However, these benefits are not guaranteed and require a concerted effort. For sport to truly contribute to achieving the SDGs, a holistic approach must be applied to infrastructure design, based on: (i) its coherent integration into the urban fabric to ensure accessibility, (ii) sustainable design principles that protect biodiversity, and above all (iii) high-quality management and operation over the long term. Without an in-depth analysis of local needs, incorporated from the design stage and reflected in the operating budget, even expertly constructed facilities are unlikely to produce the expected results. Sport can only serve as an effective catalyst for development when aligned with a comprehensive, inclusive, and sustainable approach.

Sport contributes directly to achieving twelve of the Sustainable Development Goals



The aim of this section is to provide guidance for AFD Group project teams, as well as any project owner or donor, on incorporating four key themes into projects for sports infrastructure: gender equality, climate, biodiversity and governance issues.

¹ WHO, 2022, [Global Status Report on Physical Activity 2022](#), p3

Sport and gender equality

Gender mainstreaming for sports infrastructure

Some key figures on specific gender issues relating to sport in Africa

90% of sports infrastructure in Senegal is not suitable for women's sports

27% of Moroccans over 15 years old who participate in sports are women

12% of Kenyan women who participate in sports are over 35 years old, compared to 58% of 17-25-year-olds

7% of teams in the semi-finals for team sports at the Rio Olympic Games (4 out of 56) were coached by women, and all of these teams were female

Women continue to face **major barriers and gender-related issues** that prevent their participation in sport:

- deeply-ingrained socio-cultural and religious barriers, and sports that are traditionally viewed as masculine/feminine;
- very limited participation among women with dependent children and women after puberty;
- minimal representation of women in sports governance (sports coaching, technical and administrative staff);
- unsuitable sports infrastructure (feeling unsafe or uncomfortable, sexism, facilities geared solely around football).

Despite these issues, **sport** can be a **vehicle for women's empowerment** as well as an effective means toward **greater autonomy, challenging gender stereotypes, and changing social norms**.

HOW CAN INFRASTRUCTURE PROMOTE WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN SPORTS?

Analyzing the local context and needs

Analyze the local context and needs through a gender-based assessment of the design and operation of sports infrastructure: this means identifying the needs, stakeholders and sports activities involved in creating an inclusive sports facility that promotes women's participation in sports and ensures the well-being and safety of all users.

The first step in conducting this assessment is to **collect data and identify needs**, particularly in relation to:

- ▶ Existing and planned women's sports to be supported/developed within the project's scope.
- ▶ The motives and reasons for sport participation by women and girls, who are the future beneficiaries of the project.
- ▶ Barriers to sports participation and ways to overcome them. This data analysis should identify the various obstacles that prevent women's participation in sports: the lack or unsuitability of infrastructure and facilities (opening hours, safety, types of activities, access, etc.); the lack of or issues relating to coaching/organization; and family, societal, and cultural pressures or taboos.

- ▶ Opinions of female athletes on access to and use of existing sports infrastructure in the area or nearby.
- ▶ The local sports ecosystem for women (associations, federations, clubs, centers, etc.).

Possible methods of collecting data and giving women and girls a voice:

- ▶ **Consult the target audience** through interviews, surveys, or focus groups (see [Focus section on page 83](#));
- ▶ **Organize a gender walk** on the future site for sports infrastructure (see Focus section below);
- ▶ **Conduct social mapping:** a visual representation produced by the partners of an infrastructure project showing how women and men engage in processes and use spaces.

Ideally, the assessment should be incorporated into the feasibility study to ensure that any issues are fully addressed in this phase, but a specific "gender-based" study may also be conducted. Expertise in gender issues, as well as in the design and operation of sports infrastructure, is required to conduct this type of gender assessment.







FOCUS

Organizing a consultation process to give a voice to women and girls

The best way to identify the specific needs of women and girls and the barriers to sport participation is through interviews, surveys, or focus groups (held by age group and covering the different socioeconomic realities of the targeted women) from the project design phase. All of these methods should be implemented by associations, consultants, or similar organizations that are well-established within the local community and preferably already work with women. It is recommended to:

- ▶ organize sessions at times when the targeted groups of women or girls are available;
- ▶ provide translations/translators or conduct these sessions in local languages, and use visual aids (drawings, pictograms, maps);
- ▶ hold single-sex focus groups to build trust and encourage women to speak freely;
- ▶ choose a suitable, pleasant, and accessible venue for the focus groups.

PROMOTING WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN SPORTS: WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS SHOULD BE FOLLOWED?

A different approach to designing, managing, and running facilities

Designing sports infrastructure:

- ▶ **Choose infrastructure suitable for sports that are already practiced in the area** and avoid focusing solely on football: identify women's/mixed sports activities, sports infrastructure needs, and the profiles of future users in order to determine which sports facilities are required (number and types of facilities depending on the sport, etc.).
- ▶ **Select sites that are accessible to all women**, including those with disabilities (accessible on foot or by public transport, in a "safe" neighborhood/area for women, etc.).



FOCUS

Gender walk

Definition: a walk undertaken with a group of women who use or live in a given location. The aim is to identify positive aspects, as well as women's needs and the problems they may experience in the space, to improve its day-to-day use.

This exercise is useful when developing sports infrastructure: on sites that already offer sports activities, this type of walk can help identify gender inequalities in how the space is used, based on various criteria, such as opening hours or the time spent there. Mapping of these areas (on and around the site), which women may view as either threatening or welcoming, can then be carried out and incorporated into the design of the sports infrastructure being built/renovated.

How do you organize a gender walk?

- ▶ Recruit groups of volunteers, ensuring that different age groups and backgrounds are represented.
- ▶ Prepare for the walk in advance: have volunteers complete a questionnaire, take notes and photos.
- ▶ Organize a feedback session with project managers and local authorities.
- ▶ For more information: the Topino method can be used to create a visual representation of user profiles in public spaces by overlaying different colors onto photos of the area to distinguish between men and women.

When to organize a gender walk: a gender walk can be helpful in the design phase, and can also be used as a tool during or at the end of the project's implementation to check whether gender issues have been effectively addressed and adapt these measures if necessary.



► Design sports infrastructure tailored to the needs of women and girls, with:

- restrooms that meet menstrual hygiene needs (provision of bins and potentially sanitary products), single-sex changing rooms and showers or water points;
- various covered or shaded sports fields/areas across the site, and enclosed spaces or facilities allowing the practice of certain sports in a more discreet setting (e.g. dance) and in certain contexts;
- multi-purpose fields that can be adapted for mixed-gender sports or to accommodate different sports (including women's sports) at different times;
- facilities tailored to women's sports (in terms of size, height, etc. such as gymnastics apparatus/street workout equipment of various sizes to suit different body types) with information signs describing possible exercises, especially for women;
- safe and well-lit spaces, particularly in the restrooms/changing rooms, to prevent inappropriate behavior and provide a secure environment;
- surveillance systems (security guards, CCTV, etc.) that ensure security without compromising personal privacy;
- rest or social areas within the grounds of the sports facility.

► Provide mixed-use spaces on the site to foster social cohesion, promote diversity, and facilitate shared responsibility among families: for example, children's play areas next to social spaces (benches, picnic areas, shaded or covered seating, etc.), and sports fields. The goal is to make the facility more appealing to families and enable different family members to participate in activities at the same time, including seniors or people with disabilities. Women can thus meet the needs of their children and other dependents, for whom they are generally responsible, while participating in sport themselves. To achieve this, the site layout must be designed in a coherent way to facilitate interaction and movement between these different spaces.

► Apply active design principles¹ in public spaces or in and around sports facilities, thus providing free, easy and accessible opportunities to take part in sport for people least likely to engage in physical activity (due to time constraints, mobility issues, lack of interest in competitive sport, etc.), and especially for women (of all different ages).

Managing and maintaining sports infrastructure:

► Management of sports facilities:

- ensure the upkeep and maintenance of facilities: functional sports facilities must be in good condition, and must not be damaged or dilapidated, to limit the risk of injury or anxiety about participating in sport; toilets, changing rooms, and other private spaces should be kept clean (regular replacement of soap, toilet paper, and sanitary products, emptying of trash cans, etc.); and water points should be maintained;
- put in place effective site monitoring/security measures to prevent inappropriate or intimidating behavior and gender-based violence;
- allocate specific opening hours/time slots for women's sports and access to the facilities;
- draft and distribute a code of conduct or set of rules to everyone who has access to the site, including measures for preventing and reporting gender-based violence, as well as potential sanctions;
- set up an advisory committee for gender equality issues

► Financial accessibility: ensure that entry fees for sports facilities are affordable for all women. Consider offering social tariffs or financial assistance to encourage the participation of women and girls.

► Specific budget: allocate a specific budget within the annual management, operation, and/or activity budget to establish and run women's sports programs on a long-term basis.

► Training for staff/coaches: organize awareness-raising sessions and training for managers and facilitators on gender issues and the inclusive management and operation of sports facilities (municipal team, local/central authorities, public/private managers, management committees, sports federation trainers, sports coaches, associations and clubs, sports training centers, etc.). Make sure that women have the same access to training in facility management and operation as their male colleagues.

Activity planning for sports infrastructure

► Develop sports programs that meet the needs and cater to the interests of women to encourage their participation, with various options for different age groups and skill levels, and women-only activities.

► Provide opportunities for women to take part in local, regional, and national competitions.

► Organize awareness campaigns aimed at women, girls, and families to promote the rights of women and girls to access sport and leisure activities, advocate for women's sports, and encourage them to use the facilities. In particular, the benefits of sport for women and the importance of gender equality in sport should be highlighted through community initiatives or specific activities at the sports facility.

¹ See Sheet on Active Design

- ▶ **Organize sporting events** and specific programs for women (see previous point) to promote the new facilities.
- ▶ **Create a welcoming and supportive atmosphere** at the site to encourage its use by women and girls.
- ▶ **Involve women representatives in organizing activities.**
- ▶ **Adapt physical activity and sports programs** by offering sports that are less well-known or viewed as gender-neutral in the country, and less likely to be associated with preconceived ideas and gender-based stereotypes. Adapt the rules of certain sports to facilitate women's participation: for example, by offering "tag rugby" (non-contact rugby), to encourage participation among women and girls.

What general recommendations apply?

Establish a monitoring, evaluation and learning system:

- ▶ **Monitoring and evaluation:** mechanisms should be put in place for gathering information based on indicators, to regularly collect feedback from users, plan developments/improvements to sports facilities and adapt the facility's management and operating models. The data from these indicators must be broken down by gender. For example: the proportion of girls and women who participated

in sports sessions, the number of women who completed training for coaching roles, the number of women and men who participated in additional sexual and reproductive health education initiatives.

Design sporting activities with and for women:

- ▶ **Involvement:** ensure gender parity and female representation in the management or leadership bodies of the sports infrastructure (including management of the site's budget and resources); encourage and support women to take on leadership, sports coaching and supervision roles.
- ▶ **Visibility:** promote the achievements of female athletes and women's sports through media campaigns and sporting events, or on the sports facility's website (painting, signs, photos, site name, etc.). Launch a communications campaign to champion female sporting role models who can inspire and motivate other women and girls to get involved (appoint sports ambassadors), and enlist support from these role models.

GENDER ACTION PLAN:

- ▶ A Gender Action Plan (GAP) should be developed to formalize the process, and its implementation should be monitored throughout the project implementation phase, with the aim of reducing gender inequalities. The GAP provides a summary of the project's aims, objectives, activities, and budget items that promote women's participation in sports, while defining related performance indicators, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the project's stakeholders.
- ▶ The GAP must cover each phase of the project cycle, from project appraisal to implementation.
- ▶ Two types of GAP are required to ensure its effectiveness and adoption:
 - **A general GAP:** this plan underpins the entire project. Developed during the feasibility study, it incorporates, from the appraisal stage and the first phase of the project cycle, gender-related issues throughout the project's entire implementation (from studies to the completion of works). It should serve as a tool for designing the project with women, assessing its impact on living conditions and their situation and position within the community/society, and identifying their specific needs.
 - **A specific GAP for each type of facility and each community** (for projects with multiple sports facilities): this second level, developed during the project's implementation and ideally at the same time as the infrastructure design studies, takes into account the local context in order to monitor, through specific indicators and over the long term, the impact on women's sports by type of infrastructure and by community.



FIND OUT MORE:

- Case Study – "Pour Elles": Sport and Culture Project

CASE STUDY

CAMEROON SPORCAP



CUB site © Regional Capitals Local Monitoring Unit

BACKGROUND

Cameroon's regional capitals are experiencing strong population growth, with the rapid expansion of a predominantly young and urban demographic (two-thirds of the population are under 25 years old). As the population increases, demand for sports infrastructure is growing. However, these facilities are already in short supply. While various large stadiums were built for the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) in 2021, (see [Case Study - AFCON](#)), these facilities are not used by the general public due to the lack of free access, meaning that the vast majority of sports are practiced on informal playing fields.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The SPORCAP program is aligned with the Regional Capitals 1 and 2 projects financed by AFD. The aim of these projects is to provide urban facilities and infrastructure in five of the country's intermediate cities: Bafoussam, Bertoua, Garoua, Maroua, and Bamenda. In keeping with these initiatives, the purpose of SPORCAP is to improve urban living conditions, in particular, by leveraging sport as a driver of development, constructing local sports facilities for communities and developing the skills of stakeholders in the sports sector. The primary objective is to support the development of grassroots sport in Cameroon, especially among young people.

In practice, SPORCAP is organized around three main components:

- Development of local sports facilities: creation of fifteen sites, three per city. A budget of €1.6 million has been allocated to each city, accounting for 80% of the project's total financing.
- Implementation of a capacity-building program for stakeholders in Cameroon's sports sector, accounting for 10% of the total financing.
- Project monitoring and management, also representing 10% of the total financing.

ORGANIZATION

Landowner	State (private and public domain) Municipalities of Bafoussam, Bertoua, Garoua, Maroua and Bamenda
Project Owner (PO)	Dual Project Ownership: • Central PO: Ministry of Housing and Urban Development • Local POs: 5 urban communities
Type of facility	Local facilities: multisports facilities for football, basketball and volleyball, athletics tracks, combat sports ring and fitness trails
Structuring of the study phase	Feasibility study: French engineering consulting firm URBAPLAN with support from independent Cameroonian and Swiss experts Planning and design study (Preliminary design/Detailed design/Request for Tender documents): single primary contractor responsible for the supervision of works (ongoing contract)
Structuring of the construction phase	Single primary contractor per city responsible for the design and supervision of works Recruitment of a single construction company per city to complete the three sports infrastructure sites (provisional allocation)
Structuring of the operational phase	To be defined according to the design of the sports sites/infrastructure
Cost per city	Feasibility study estimates and average development cost per site: • Bafoussam: 3 sites, €533,356 • Bamenda: 3 sites, €533,309 • Bertoua: 3 sites, €533,309 • Garoua: 3 sites, €533,309 • Maroua: 3 sites, €533,309

Type of infrastructure

I/N	R	L	D
-----	---	---	---

BENEFICIARY: Government of Cameroon

PROJECT OWNER:
Central: Ministry of Housing and Urban Development
Local: Urban communities

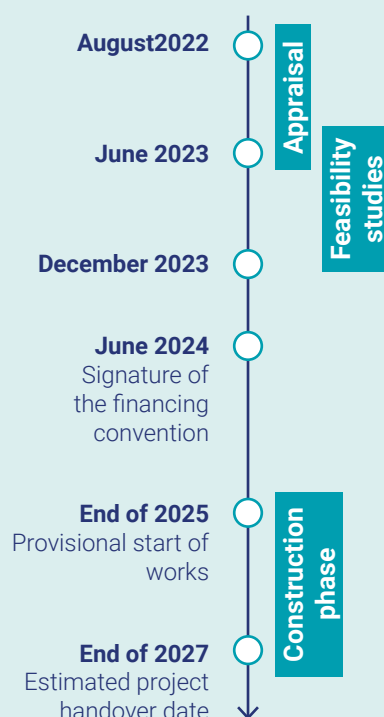
OPERATOR: To be determined

FINANCING MECHANISM: Grant

AMOUNT: €10 M

AFD DIVISION: Urban Development, Planning, and Housing

PROJECT TIMELINE





PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Renovation of sports infrastructure: the project involves the renovation and/or construction of three sites per city. These sites are designed to host a wide variety of sports, such as football, basketball, volleyball, athletics, with a combat sports ring and fitness trails. These facilities are located on land belonging either to the State, under public or private ownership, or to the municipalities.

The renovation of existing infrastructure was prioritized to optimize turnaround times, so that communities could use these facilities as soon as possible. This helps to meet existing demand for sports activities, while making it easier to identify and secure the land rights.

Building the capacities of sports stakeholders in Cameroon: this capacity-building will draw on French public expertise. This component will aim to (i) build the management and operational capacities of the municipal teams in the five cities, and (ii) improve the training offered by Cameroonian organizations specializing in sports professions (in particular, the National Institute of Youth and Sports and the National Youth and Sports Centers) relating to the management, operation, and programming of local sports facilities.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Best practices:

- ▶ **Involving sports stakeholders from the consultation phase:** one of the main improvements made by SPORCAP, having drawn on the lessons learned from the sports components of the CR1 and CR2 programs, is involving stakeholders in the sports sector from the consultation phase. The process begins with the involvement of the Ministry of Sports. This participatory process is then expanded to include regional and local institutional stakeholders, as well as representatives of sports associations and federations, thus providing a forum to discuss programming for facilities from the design stage. This collaborative approach is particularly beneficial for regional stakeholders aiming to develop a public sports policy, while drawing on the experience of these experts in sports programming.
- ▶ **Incorporating a capacity-building component for management and maintenance is crucial to the long-term viability of infrastructure:** this component is specifically designed to build the capacities of stakeholders in the Cameroonian sports ecosystem, and particularly those responsible for the management and maintenance of local facilities financed by the project.

- ▶ **A project centered around the construction of local sports facilities:** major infrastructure projects are often prioritized by national leaders to enhance the country's standing across the continent. However, this demand, expressed by organizations under the Ministry of Sports in particular, is not aligned with SPORCAP's primary objective to meet the needs of local communities for access to quality, local sports facilities. These types of large-scale projects should be the subject of specific studies, independent of SPORCAP.
- ▶ **A dual governance model that gives responsibility to local authorities as project owners:** the establishment of a dual governance structure, at both the national and local levels, gives greater responsibility to local authorities as project owners (POs) for the design, construction, and management phases of infrastructure. This shared governance model also better meets the needs of residents and future users, based on a deeper understanding of the specific local context. The SPORCAP program also gives local authorities the opportunity to develop a genuine local sports policy, sometimes creating a dedicated sports department where none existed before.

- ▶ **Specific support on gender issues:** a gender assessment is performed, giving rise to a gender action plan (GAP) that is then incorporated into the project. This component, implemented under the project ownership of Agence Française de Développement (AFD), with FAPS-CLS funding, aims to further embed gender issues into the design and management of local sports facilities, in order to promote women's participation in sports at future SPORCAP sites.

Recommendations :

- ▶ **Prioritize the renovation of existing infrastructure:** make optimal use of the resources available and deliver facilities faster, while limiting the risks associated with land acquisition and long delays, and ensuring efficient use.
- ▶ **Ensure infrastructure is accessible to the general public:** implement a management system specifically for playing fields on land belonging to third parties (National Youth and Sports Center – CENAJES, schools, high schools) to ensure equitable access for all, including outside of the timetables of the educational establishments concerned

Sport and climate change

Developing resilient and low-carbon infrastructure

WHAT CHALLENGES ARE INVOLVED?

Climate change poses a significant threat to the sports industry and the sector as a whole, with more frequent heat waves and floods, increasing air and water pollution, and less snow in winter, etc. With global warming projections of 2°C or 4°C, there will inevitably be a decline in regular sports participation¹ and broader knock-on effects for the sports industry in general.

While certain sports may directly cause air pollution and exacerbate climate change, in general terms, it is essential to build **resilient sports facilities adapted** to the effects of climate change (such as flood-resistant sports infrastructure), while also **promoting responsible and resilient maintenance and operation**.

WHAT STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK APPLIES TO SPORT AND CLIMATE ACTION?

In 2024, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) published a sports for climate action framework, outlining a climate action strategy for the sector based on four key principles:

- 1) Undertake systematic efforts** to promote greater environmental responsibility among sporting organizations; At a minimum, sport organizations, starting with the most influential sporting federations, must align their actions with the standards of good practice for climate change adaptation, by incorporating these practices into their sustainability strategies and action plans, and by considering issues that influence the impact of climate change on sports participation now and in the future.
- 2) Reduce overall climate impact:** this involves measuring and understanding the carbon footprint of new or renovated infrastructure and using this information to guide technical and architectural decisions, all while defining a hierarchy for the measures taken: (i) **avoid** new build construction projects where possible (see Case Study – YOG Dakar and Case Study – SPORCAP Program); (ii) **reduce** emissions by opting for low-carbon construction methods; (iii) **replace** existing infrastructure with more suitable and resilient sports facilities and materials; (iv) **offset** carbon emissions through additional climate action (such as planting greenery and protecting biodiversity in the area surrounding the sports facility, see Tool Sheet – Promoting Climate Action through Sport); (v) produce a report on the facility's carbon footprint and the action taken to help disseminate knowledge and the lessons learned.

3) Promote sustainable and responsible consumption by focusing on (i) greener energy and reduced consumption in general, (ii) more sustainable management of water resources, (iii) more responsible waste management and (iv) incentives to use active transport to access facilities.

4) Advocate for climate action through communication via social media, specific events and sports networks.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

From the initial identification phase of a sports facility project and throughout its implementation (construction/operation), **issues around resilience to climate change and limiting CO₂ emissions should be taken into account**. These issues should be addressed in particular during feasibility studies, in order to **reduce the facility's carbon footprint** – which is highly recommended for this type of project – and during the implementation phase, once the models for management and maintenance have been finalized.

Based on the UNFCCC strategic framework, **AFD Group has issued the following recommendations** for incorporating climate issues into a sports infrastructure project:

Design and construction phase

- ▶ **Prioritize the conversion of existing buildings over new builds:** renovating existing facilities or investing in underutilized spaces should take priority.
- ▶ **Optimize sports infrastructure programming:** ensure that the feasibility study makes optimal use of infrastructure from the basement to the roof space, with more frequent and shared use of existing spaces and a wider range of sporting activities, while making spaces multifunctional where possible (cultural events, coworking, etc.).
- ▶ **Make sports facilities accessible via active transport:** transport is the primary source of carbon emissions for major sports infrastructure, and sustainable forms of travel must therefore be incorporated from the design phase of the project, particularly for international/national or regional infrastructure, often located outside of the city center. The following factors must be taken into account: (i) selecting the site based on its accessibility via the city's public

¹ According to a 2021 report by WWF France on the effects of climate change on the world of sport (WWF, 2021), a global warming increase of +2°C, could reduce participation in sports by up to 24 days in France, and this figure increases to 66 days with a 4°C rise in temperatures (i.e. 2 months). The repercussions of this global warming will be even greater in other geographical areas where AFD operates.

transport network where possible, or during the feasibility study phase to assess its relevance; (ii) extending the public transport network as part of the project, applying active design principles to encourage travel on foot or by bike between the city center and the facility, and providing parking for cars and bikes nearby, etc.

- ▶ **Access support from the Program for Energy Efficiency in Buildings (PEEB) from the project appraisal phase:** ensure the best technical and architectural decisions are made based on the project's climate assessment, and continue to apply these principles throughout the project cycle studies (see box opposite).
- ▶ **Encourage the use of alternative technical solutions:** LED lighting, drainage systems adapted to rainfall patterns, rainwater harvesting systems for toilets and irrigation systems, use of local, bio-based, and/or recycled materials² (wood, raw earth, low-carbon concrete, recycled plastic bleachers), green roofs, natural ventilation systems, reinforced insulation, etc. There are many technical solutions available which cover all aspects of buildings. These recommendations should be made when drafting the terms of reference for consultants responsible for technical studies and when preparing bidding documents.
- ▶ **Propose technical surfacing solutions adapted to climate conditions:** for example, synthetic, natural, or hybrid turf for stadiums – see Tool Sheet - Specialized Sports Surfaces.
- ▶ **Use suitable materials and designs to construct roofs:** cover certain playing fields with a roof so that they can still be used in very hot weather or periods of heavy rainfall.
- ▶ **Promote the use of renewable energy:** for example, by installing photovoltaic panels on roofs or using geothermal energy.
- ▶ **Plant trees and create suitable green spaces:** create areas of shade and cool islands on-site or in the area around sports facilities, particularly in countries with high temperatures (see [Technical Sheet - Sport and Nature](#)), improve rainwater management on-site, etc.

Management and maintenance phase

- ▶ **Engage in dialogue with the future operator:** encourage sustainable use and maintenance practices.
- ▶ **Encourage the sharing of knowledge and best practices:** share feedback between projects financed by AFD Group and establish communities of experts in the country (or neighboring countries) to promote the energy transition for sports infrastructure, following the example of the [2023 Sports Infrastructure League](#) organized by the French Energy Savings Championships.
- ▶ **Promote responsible purchasing among clubs, local authorities, schools, and associations:** following the example of the French collective “Éthique sur l'Étiquette” (Ethics on Labels), which informs and raises awareness among the general public about responsible purchasing.

PEEB: PROGRAM FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN BUILDINGS

The PEEB is a facility that provides technical support to partner countries in their efforts to develop sustainable, low-carbon, and climate-resilient infrastructure through a combination of financing and policy advice. This facility can be used in all of AFD Group's areas of operation.

For a sports infrastructure project, the PEEB team within AFD Group's Energy Division mobilizes expertise from specialist engineering consulting firms that support and advise AFD project owners and teams throughout the project cycle.



² Reclaimed materials can also be used to add a distinctive and innovative architectural style to major sports infrastructure: this is evidenced by the Meinau stadium in Strasbourg, where sections of fuselage from decommissioned Airbus aircraft will be used to create a sunshade system. Source: [The Destination Meinau Project \(destination-meinau.eu\)](#)

Sport and nature

Promoting climate action through sport

WHAT CHALLENGES ARE INVOLVED?

While certain sports and competition venues have a negative impact on biodiversity in the surrounding area (soil sealing, use of pesticides and herbicides, multiple types of pollution: air, light, noise and plastic, etc.) **sport and the natural environment are intrinsically linked and mutually dependent**. Participating in outdoor and water sports in a safe and sustainable way requires clean air and water that is healthy for swimming, while protecting natural environments. Physical activity and sports therefore have a crucial role to play in promoting and **protecting biodiversity**. In this regard, **Nature-based Solutions (NBS) can be incorporated into the development of sports facilities**, to promote a sustainable approach to sports in urban areas. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) have drawn on this synergy between sport and nature to define a suitable strategy and set of recommendations that provide co-benefits.

THE SPORTS FOR NATURE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK DEFINED BY THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)

The [2022 report by the UNEP](#) sets out four key principles for the sports sector, and sports infrastructure in particular, to deliver nature-positive action:

- 1) Set a baseline for nature:** this principle involves establishing the dependencies between nature and the site's infrastructure to identify which natural features and species are most in need of protection and conservation in the project area. For example, AFD's Fengxiang project in China is financing, among other things, the creation of a green corridor (an area for cultural and physical activities and sports) around a lake. This project has been designed based on the findings of an in-depth biodiversity assessment conducted on the site. Furthermore, continuous monitoring of biodiversity throughout the project is required, along with the systematic review of the primary contractor's deliverables by the biodiversity expert, to protect the site's natural characteristics and meet the project's biodiversity targets.
- 2) Align with the mitigation and conservation hierarchy:** this hierarchy recommends the implementation of four action plans according to the role and available resources of each stakeholder: (i) **Avoid** negative impacts on nature (renovating existing sites rather than constructing new facilities); (ii) **Reduce** by minimizing the harm caused by any unavoidable impacts; (iii) **Restore** damaged ecosystems; (iv) **Renew**

by creating new ecosystems. The UNEP emphasizes that many of these actions simply require due attention and consideration. For its part, the IUCN has outlined various mitigation and conservation recommendations for the sports sector (see the IUCN Recommendations section below).

- 3) Work with others, including local stakeholders, to protect biodiversity:** establishing partnerships with NGOs, experts, and academics specializing in local nature conservation is essential, particularly when organizing awareness-raising activities for future users. Moreover, it is important that women and the most vulnerable groups are represented when selecting stakeholders for the consultation process, and that their opinions are taken into account on site use, to ensure the protection and sustainability of these areas, especially when it comes to biodiversity. This social inclusion also ensures that sports activities are designed to meet the needs of all users, thus helping to protect biodiversity in the surrounding area and making sure that existing protection measures are implemented effectively.

- 4) Educate and advocate for nature conservation:** sport can be used as a vehicle for education and raising awareness about biodiversity conservation, by organizing media campaigns, promoting sporting events, and adapting the rules of certain sports. For example, traditional lion hunting is no longer practiced by Maasai warriors during the Maasai Olympics in Kenya.¹ Ongoing communication and the sharing of good environmental practices inherently help to drive change in the sector.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Even in cities, biodiversity issues can be incorporated from the initial identification phase of a sports infrastructure project and throughout its implementation (construction/operation). These issues should be addressed during the feasibility study and the implementation phase in particular, once the models for management and maintenance have been finalized. Based on the UNEP strategic framework, **AFD Group has issued the following recommendations** for integrating biodiversity issues into sports infrastructure projects:

¹ In 2022, 88 % of Maasai warriors state that they have given up lion hunting. Source: IUCN, *Play For Nature, From fields to forest: sports' role in biodiversity protection, Transformative actions. Solutions #51*.

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION PHASE

- ▶ **Ensure that the detailed Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) explicitly addresses this issue.** Required during the appraisal phase for an AFD project with an E&S risk classified as A or B+, the ESIA is used to select technical solutions that are the least harmful to the environment, assess the project's impact, and propose a mitigation and carbon offsetting strategy based on the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). See [Method Sheet - Focus Point 2: Project Life Cycle - Monitoring and Evaluation](#).
- ▶ **Incorporate a biodiversity study and a “nature in the city” approach** when the location of the project and/or sports area requires it (if the site is near a natural area such as a forest, wetland or lake, etc., in an area of outstanding natural beauty, or close to a watercourse). This study can be incorporated from the feasibility phase of the project in order to establish an environmental and social framework, and then adapted during the technical study phases as required.
- ▶ **Opt for a design that has a limited impact on biodiversity** or even that improves the conditions for natural diversity (see section below, IUCN Recommendations).
- ▶ **Create greenways between biodiversity areas in urban environments.** The development of green corridors (rows of trees) along existing roads, and, more generally, the reinstatement of natural areas around urban roads, facilitates the movement of wildlife while also promoting participation in urban outdoor sports and activities, as well as active mobility (running, cycling and walking, etc.).
- ▶ **Ensure diversity of local flora** through the landscaping decisions made during the technical study phase of projects. This leads to a systemic improvement in quality of life (air quality, fewer invasive species, general well-being) for athletes, residents, and more broadly, local ecosystems.
- ▶ **Ensure diversity of habitats** through the landscaping and site layout decisions made during the technical study phase of projects. This helps to improve quality of life within ecosystems: creating multi-layered areas of vegetation, extending ecological corridors (blue and green) and ecological networks by adding other natural features (water sources, meadows, shrubs, etc.).
- ▶ **Prioritize native species** in the landscaping decisions made during the technical study phase of projects to promote the sustainability of ecosystems. This also facilitates the organization of educational events to raise awareness among athletes and local residents.
- ▶ **Provide conservation resources specific to the local environment for projects that provide an opportunity** to promote both biodiversity conservation and the sport in question. For example, the World Surf League has teamed up with NGO Coral Gardeners to protect coral reefs in French Polynesia by raising awareness among surfers committed to conserving these reefs and protecting surf spots.

MANAGEMENT PHASE

- ▶ **Apply an eco-friendly approach to sports facility management** by focusing specifically and continuously on the protection and management of biodiversity on-site and in the surrounding area of the sports field. Data collected on the quantity and quality of the surrounding biodiversity can also be used to refine the facility's management strategy. Finally, for national and regional infrastructure, registering for a biodiversity initiative or obtaining environmental certification may be a viable option. This approach legitimizes and improves the sustainable management of the natural environment surrounding the site.

IUCN RECOMMENDATIONS

Taking this approach further, the [IUCN](#), based on its definition of Nature-Based Solutions², has proposed six general recommendations that can be incorporated into any sports facility project, namely:

- ▶ **Ensure that green spaces are sufficiently large** on sports sites in cities, which are often substantial land reserves, by protecting or developing any existing areas of natural vegetation. Where appropriate, projects to develop sports facilities may involve the creation of green spaces (places for physical activity and sports) in underserved areas.



² Nature-based Solutions are defined by the IUCN as “actions to protect, sustainably manage and restore natural or modified ecosystems to directly address societal challenges in an effective and adaptive manner, while ensuring human well-being and producing benefits for biodiversity.”

FOCUS :

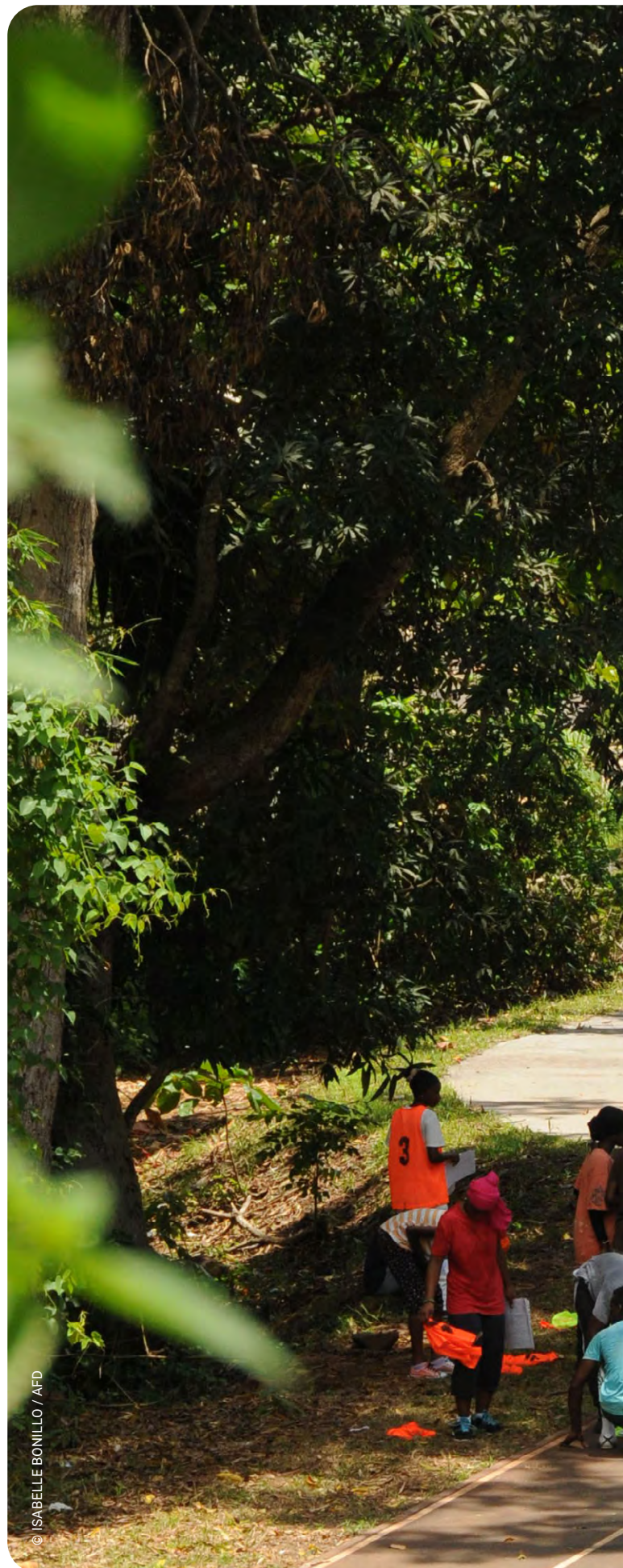
Planting trees around sports fields

Planting trees around sports fields is an effective way of providing shade in these areas. However, several essential criteria must be taken into account:

- ▶ **Opt for local species suited to the climate conditions,** with deep and non-aggressive root systems, in order to prevent shallow roots from lifting up the soil or damaging sports surfaces.
- ▶ **Comply with minimum distances between plants.** In France, the Civil Code and the recommendations of Cerema require a distance of at least 2 meters between a tree over 2 meters tall and the property line. In practice, a distance of 3 to 5 meters is recommended to facilitate the maintenance of sports facilities, ensure the safety of the surrounding areas, and avoid areas of constant shade on natural or synthetic turf.
- ▶ **Check that there are no underground networks in the vicinity** or, failing that, comply with the minimum distance between roots and underground networks (generally over 2 meters between the network and the tree trunk according to French standards).

RESOURCES

AFD Group's *Biodiversity in Cities - Technical Guide*, produced by the Urban Development, Planning, and Housing Division, provides a documented reference framework to "consciously" value biodiversity in urban projects and public policies financed by AFD.



© ISABELLE BONILLO / AFD



Sport and governance

Ensuring better governance of sports infrastructure projects

WHAT CHALLENGES ARE INVOLVED?

Governance encompasses all methods of decision-making, management, and regulation within a society. Improved governance helps to (i) promote an institutional, political, and civic environment conducive to fair and sustainable development, (ii) (re)build trust between populations, governments, and institutions, and (iii) support agents of change and innovation leaders in transforming their regions.

Can sport be a lever for regional governance? While sports and sports infrastructure may not be a central pillar of regional governance policies, they can nonetheless serve as a cross-cutting and unifying vehicle for local and even national development.

Sports facilities form an integral part of their physical and social environment, and hold symbolic meaning, while bringing together a diverse range of stakeholders – local authorities, ministries, technical departments, federations, associations and private operators – around practical issues such as planning, maintenance, inclusion, and shared use of public spaces. Their management often requires multi-level coordination and collaborative governance, encouraging the pooling of skills and the participation of stakeholders, particularly citizens.

Sports facilities thus become spaces for dialogue and experimentation, where urban development, educational, social, and environmental policies are all interconnected. By building the capacities of regional authorities in planning, management, and cooperation, sport can help foster a culture of more integrated, participatory, and sustainable governance.

HOW CAN SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE SERVE AS A VEHICLE FOR IMPROVING GOVERNANCE?

Sports infrastructure projects can help promote the key pillars of AFD Group's governance strategy, by:

- ▶ **supporting government reform and the rule of law** by building the capacities of public authorities through training, as well as the sharing of experience and technical expertise. (This may involve the Ministry of Sports and Youth for major infrastructure projects);
- ▶ **transferring economic and financial governance** to local authorities and civil society organizations (CSOs) to support the decentralization/devolution of governance in regions (see examples of Urban Fabric Initiatives);
- ▶ **creating fairer societies** by fostering values such as social cohesion through the practice of team sports;
- ▶ **strengthening democratic processes** by providing access to sports for all, and thus facilitating the development of elite athletes;
- ▶ **mobilizing diaspora populations** by developing sports projects with their support (*see Case Study – PAISD Program, Senegal*) where the Senegalese diaspora participated in the building of local sports facilities);
- ▶ **promoting human rights** by providing access to sports facilities for people with disabilities, ensuring the protection of children and minors through access to sports, and transmitting values that foster social harmony;
- ▶ **Combating gender-based violence (GBV)** by making sports infrastructure safe and accessible to girls and women, while promoting their participation in sport.



OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

While all sports projects promote good governance, **local sports facilities** promote access to sports and physical activity for the largest number of people because of their location in neighborhoods:

- ▶ **Encourage citizen and CSO participation**, through participatory workshops, for example, from the project's inception, and as part of Urban Fabric Initiatives to support local micro-projects.
- ▶ **Involve local authorities as project owners and managers** to ensure the project's long-term viability, if the institutional and financial model allows. A CSO can also take over the site's management and programming.
- ▶ **Involve diaspora populations**: this helps to mobilize support and assistance for local sports micro-projects and also rebuilds trust between institutions and these populations.
- ▶ **Include women and vulnerable groups** in the decision-making process, both during design and management of the project (see Technical Sheet - Sports and Gender Equality).
- ▶ **Build the capacities of local organizations** (CSOs and local authorities) and national institutions (ministries and federations) by providing specific training to improve governance of the country's sports sector.
- ▶ **Promote a business model that offers differentiated pricing** to facilitate access to sports for everyone, regardless of their socio-professional background. For example, students and disadvantaged populations were offered a subsidized rate (based on a pooled funding mechanism) to access the swimming pool created for the YOG Dakar project.



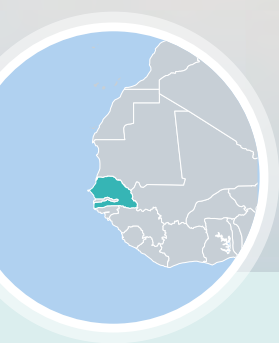
FIND OUT MORE:

- [Technical Sheet – Management Model for Urban Fabric Initiatives](#)
- [Case Study – Urban Fabric Initiative in Dakar](#)
- [Case Study – Urban Fabric Initiative in Tunis](#)
- [Case Study – PAISD Program \(Senegal\)](#)



CASE STUDY

SENEGAL PAISD Program



© PAISD

BACKGROUND

Senegal has a large diaspora of 2.5 to 3 million people, who mainly live in other African countries or in Europe. The Program to Support Solidarity Initiatives for Development (PAISD), which is managed and coordinated by the Technical Cooperation Department (DCT), mobilizes diaspora resources to support development in their regions of origin. The program is structured around three main components: support for community-driven and productive investments, and the mobilization of skills..

The sports component of the program aims to maximize the legacy of the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games based on two key areas:

- increasing the number of local public sports facilities in various secondary cities (plan to create ten local facilities);
- building the capacities of Senegalese sports stakeholders by leveraging French expertise.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The DCT has developed a comprehensive technical model with varying components: multisports facilities (football, athletics and basketball), a gymnasium (for gymnastics, fitness, and also cultural events), a caretaker's lodge, changing rooms, offices and storage areas, etc.

This model is then adapted to each local area in accordance with its specific requirements. AFD and the DCT are providing funding (part of which has been covered by the diaspora or local authorities) as well as technical support.

ORGANIZATION

Landowner	Public land or land without the need for acquisition/compensation
Type of facility	10 sports facilities including: • a multisports facility • a gymnasium • changing rooms
Structuring of the study phase	• Local project ownership: local authorities and associations that require a local sports facility, selected by the DCT (delegated project owner) via a call for expressions of interest (CEI) • Primary contractor: Senegalese architectural firm (Archi-Building & Consult) • Feasibility studies: international consultant (Jean Pierrot)
Structuring of the construction phase	Direct consultations with construction companies by local associations and authorities appointed as local project owners through the CEI, with support from the DCT
Structuring of the operational phase	Operation by local authorities and associations (anticipated option)
Cost per facility	Estimated cost per infrastructure (10 in total): €600,000

Type of infrastructure



BENEFICIARY: Senegalese government

PROJECT OWNER:

Central: Senegalese government

Delegated project owner: Technical Cooperation Department

Local: Local authorities

FINANCING MECHANISM: Grant

AMOUNT: €6 M

AFD DIVISION: Governance

PROJECT TIMELINE





PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Development of infrastructure in rural areas lacking facilities

The program aims to provide the general public with access to quality sports infrastructure that meets the standards of international federations and strict technical specifications, in areas historically lacking such facilities. The project is focused primarily on the development of recreational sports. It should be noted that each project requires a plot of land ranging from 2.5 to 4 hectares.

A program with varying components (sports and cultural activities) adapted to local areas

The program involves varying components, which may include a multisports facility (football, athletics and basketball), a gymnasium (gymnastics, fitness, and cultural activities), a caretaker's lodge, changing rooms, offices, and storage areas. Each project is precisely defined in collaboration with local authorities and associations. The project also aims to promote cultural activities, by transforming these spaces into venues for leisure and cultural events.

Gender inclusion

The program incorporates gender inclusion at all levels. This means creating appropriate facilities that offer separate changing rooms or that promote women's participation in sports, while ensuring the protection of personal privacy in particular.

Inclusion of people with disabilities

All of these facilities will provide access to people with disabilities, with this requirement being incorporated from the project design phase.

Greater social cohesion

These sites will become community hubs for local residents, thus strengthening essential social ties. This social aspect will be incorporated into the design of this infrastructure, thus going beyond simple sports facilities. The project's method of implementation is designed to strengthen social ties, through a call for expressions of interest from local authorities, associations and the diaspora, to encourage their buy-in to the project, and ensure its long-term management.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Best practices:

- **Provision of quality sports infrastructure in rural areas:** The program aims to address the lack of facilities in rural areas by developing infrastructure of the same quality as in urban areas, in order to meet the basic needs of residents.
- **Participatory approach and involvement of local stakeholders:** it is essential to involve local stakeholders throughout every stage of the project – from definition to implementation, and also in monitoring the management and maintenance of the facility – to ensure local buy-in and the long-term viability of facilities.

- **Consideration of technical solutions' resistance to local conditions:** it is important to select materials and technical solutions suited to local environmental conditions (such as heat, drought, and sandy environments) to ensure the durability of sports infrastructure and minimize maintenance costs over the long term.
- **Mobilization of the diaspora population to support the project's implementation:** encouraging the local diaspora to contribute to the financing and construction of sports infrastructure, by leveraging their resources, expertise, and network, will make the project more effective.

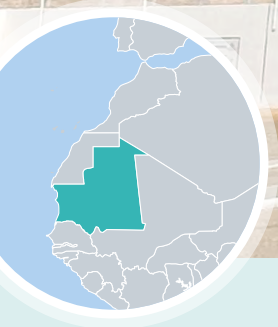
Recommendations:

- **Assign responsibility for management and maintenance over the long term:** establish a sustainable model for the management and maintenance of infrastructure after its construction, by actively involving local communities and putting in place monitoring systems to prevent premature deterioration of these facilities.
- **Make sports infrastructure accessible to schoolchildren:** providing access to the completed facility for schoolchildren is a strategic issue that should be addressed locally within the organizational management framework. These facilities thus complement existing infrastructure.
- **Create sports infrastructure that serves as a community hub:** sports infrastructure should be designed to create social hubs, with meeting places for everyone regardless of whether they participate in sport, by incorporating services such as cafeterias to create a lively and sociable atmosphere.
- **Develop a technical program aligned with local needs:** the technical choices made, particularly in terms of compliance with standards, must meet the sport-related needs of the entire community.

CASE STUDY

MAURITANIA

Youth, Culture and Sport



© Marine MARMORAT / AFD

Type of infrastructure

I/N	R	L	D
-----	---	---	---

BENEFICIARY: Islamic Republic of Mauritania

PROJECT OWNER:

Central: Ministry of the Economy and Sustainable Development

Delegated project owner: National Agency for the Execution and Monitoring of Projects

OPERATOR: To be determined

FINANCING MECHANISM: Grant

AMOUNT: €18 M

(National contribution of over €1.3 million)

AFD DIVISION: Urban Development, Planning, and Housing

PROJECT TIMELINE



BACKGROUND

Young people in Mauritania, particularly those in disadvantaged neighborhoods and cities, face multiple challenges: unemployment, a lack of prospects, the risk of radicalization and migration.

To tackle these issues, Mauritania's National Youth Strategy 2020-2030 leverages sport and culture to help young people reach their full potential.

However, the local facilities available to young people, such as youth centers where they can socialize and participate in sports and cultural activities, are inadequate for a number of reasons: dilapidation, unsuitability for new activities and uses, management and maintenance issues, a lack of structured programs, shortage of qualified instructors, and underuse.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The "Youth, Culture, and Sport" project aims to improve these facilities for young people. The project is divided into three key areas based on the "hard" and "soft" aspects of sport:

- the establishment of public sports and cultural facilities in disadvantaged neighborhoods;
- support for the development of Sport and Culture ecosystems, including legal support for the application of the Sports Law and for the delivery of a training program for sports instructors at the Higher Institute of Youth and Sports of Mauritania;
- project monitoring and management.



ORGANIZATION

Landowner	Public and available land (owned by the municipality or state)
Type of facility	Nouakchott – 10 facilities: • Commune of Arafat: renovation of the stadium and development of local sports areas and small sports facilities (pétanque courts) • Commune of Dar Naim: renovation of the multi-purpose facility, small sports facilities (pétanque courts, karate center) and cultural facilities (library) Nouadhibou – 5 facilities: • renovation of the Tarhil youth center • development of sports facilities at the Pôle Madrid stadium • modifications to municipal sports facilities to provide access for people with reduced mobility.
Structuring of the study phase	Feasibility study: • Implementation: consortium of engineering consulting firms (URBAPLAN - TASMIN) and a French association (CULTURE & DEVELOPMENT) • Financing: FAPS through the Social Link Division
Structuring of the construction phase	Work contracts to be awarded by the delegated project owner
Structuring of the operational phase	Currently being defined by a committee responsible for the institutional and social project management
Cost of sports facilities	€12 million allocated for the 15 facilities

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Leveraging sport and culture to promote social cohesion and inclusion of young people in disadvantaged neighborhoods

By renovating sports and cultural infrastructure, the project aims to create community hubs and provide opportunities to socialize for young people in Mauritania. It will also help to improve quality of life in Nouakchott and Nouadhibou.

The project is expected to benefit 375,000 people in total (250,000 residents in the two neighborhoods in Nouakchott and 125,000 in Nouadhibou).

KEY TAKEAWAYS

At the time of writing this guide, this project was still underway. The “key takeaways” have been taken from the feasibility study and from early in the project’s implementation.

Best practices:

- **Incorporation of both the “hard” and “soft” components of sport:** the project combines the renovation and construction of sports infrastructure (“hard” component) with the development of an ecosystem for training and programming (“soft” component). This ensures a balance between developing physical infrastructure and providing in-person support to maximize the project’s impact.
- **Training for facilitators:** providing training for the facilitators responsible for managing and running the renovated facilities helps ensure their long-term viability and effective use.

For a world in common

AFD Group finances and drives the transition to a fairer, safer and more resilient world, working with its partners to support communities all over the world. Drawing on the complementary strengths of its entities – Agence Française de Développement for public financing, Proparco for responsible private investment, and Expertise France for technical expertise – the Group is ideally positioned to meet all sustainable development challenges.

Working in over 160 countries, including France's Overseas Territories and Departments, the Group adapts its operations to the realities on the ground, actively supporting local initiatives. With over 4,000 projects, whose objectives are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), AFD Group works on behalf of the French people, together with all stakeholders committed to economic development and the preservation of common goods: climate, biodiversity, peace, gender equality and global health.

Working by your side, toward a world in common.



www.afd.fr

Twitter : @AFD_France - Facebook : AFDOfficiel - Instagram : afd_france

5, rue Roland Barthes - 75598 Paris cedex 12 - France

Tel. : +33 1 53 44 31 31