



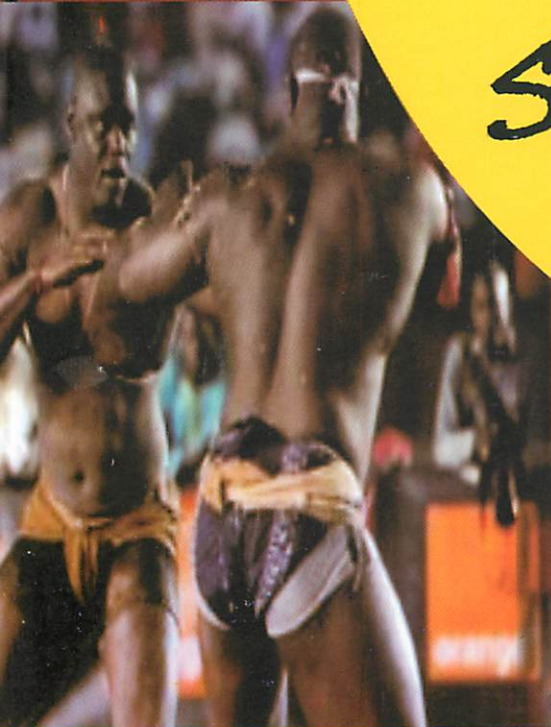
ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF
WEST AFRICAN STATES



ECOWAS

Sports Policy

2010 - 2020



ECOWAS Sports Policy 2010-2020



ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES (ECOWAS)

ECOWAS SPORTS POLICY

ECOWAS Sports Policy 2010-2020



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1. PREAMBLE

Sports are athlete/participant and administrators centered activities. The sports system is put in place for athletes/participants and administrators who are the primary focus in the development of policies, programs and procedures. Athletes/participants, administrators and governments are primarily involved throughout the system in policy formulation and decision making that directly relate to sports development and administration.

The policy document represents a declaration of ECOWAS of States' shared values and aspirations on the role of sports as a special purpose vehicle for regional integration and also in pursuant to ECOWAS strategic vision 2020.

The policy document declares the rationale for the policy, situational analysis of the community's strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to sports development in the region; statement of policy objectives, stakeholders and beneficiaries, policy guidelines and expected outcomes, recommended priority areas for sports development, resource requirements and institutional framework for implementation of the policy.

The policy is unique as it is backed by a strategic action plan to translate the policy into concrete actions. Therefore, Member States are called upon to actively support the implementation of the policy at national and regional levels.

1.1 Rationale for the ECOWAS Sports Policy

Article 61 of the Revised ECOWAS Treaty, states that "....the commitment of the Community to promote and enhance the practice of sports with the view to bringing together the youths of the region and ensuring their balanced development". Development of a sports policy becomes necessary as a result of, Resolution No. VII.00.12/CMJS of 1/9/00 of the meeting of the

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session of ECOWAS/CMJS, at Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso on the development of Sports, recommendations of the Conference of Ministers of Youth and Sports held in Cotonou, Benin, July, 2008 on Sports Development in the region and resolution No. VII.00.12/CMJS of 1/9/00 adopting the Niamey Wrestling tournament as an ECOWAS Sport. This gave the Directorate of Gender Development, Youth, Sports, Civil Society, Employment and Drug Control, and the ECOWAS Youth and Sports Development Centre of the ECOWAS Commission the mandate to develop a sports policy to serve as a tool for cooperation among the Ministries of Youth and Sports in Member States, inter-governmental and non-governmental sporting organizations. Furthermore the rationale for this policy is in pursuance of the ECOWAS Vision 2020, encapsulated as follows:

The Vision:

“ECOWAS of Peoples - A borderless, prosperous and cohesive region where people have the capacity to access and harness its enormous resources through the creation of opportunities for sustainable development and environmental preservation.”

Objectives of ECOWAS

“To promote cooperation and integration, leading to the establishment of an economic union in West Africa in order to raise the living standards of the peoples, and to maintain and enhance economic stability, foster relations among Member States and contribute to the progress and development of the African Continent”.

To give concrete expression to the transition from “ECOWAS of States to ECOWAS of Peoples”, the new vision is articulated around five pillars and summarised as follows:

- a. Good Governance
- b. Infrastructure Development
- c. Private Sector
- d. Women, Children and Youth,

e. Sustainable Natural Resource and Environmental Utilization.

This Policy document becomes imperative so that the region shall join the global sporting community in echoing the continental and international priorities as contained in the relevant agreed instruments, such as the AU Policy Framework for sustainable development of sport in Africa (2008-2018)

In consonance with ECOWAS objective of integration promoting the development of its people through human capital development initiatives, sports can be employed as a potent means of achieving these objectives through the organisation of sporting events that bring together people to interact, share and learn in cordial environments.

1.2 Definition of Sports

Sports are games and health promoting physical activities that are institutionalized with the codified rules and regulations governing them at the recreational and competitive levels.

1.3 Vision and Mission of the ECOWAS Sports Policy

The vision of the ECOWAS Sports Policy is:

To position sports as a key sector of the socio-economic lives of its people, a vehicle for human development, peaceful co-existence and regional integration,

The mission of the ECOWAS Sports Policy is:

To provide the overall sports policy framework and direction for sports, facilitate the process of policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation and foster greater public-private

sector participation in sports.

To achieve this mission, ECOWAS shall be guided by the following core values:

- Employment of well-trained innovative personnel;
- Establishment of good corporate governance and management;
- Adherence to professional standards in all relationships with stakeholders and development partners; and
- Commitment to honesty, transparency, dedication and highest ethical values.

1.4 Objectives of the ECOWAS Sports Policy

The ECOWAS Sports Policy has the following objectives:

- To harmonise and coordinate the position of Member States of ECOWAS
- With regard to facilitation of:
- Sport for All, as a human right in living, learning and work contexts in ECOWAS Member States;
 - Sport for Excellence, or elitist participation, and prestigious achievements;
 - Sport for Persons with special needs;
 - Sport for Women;
 - Sport for Development and Peace;
 - Sport for Integration;
 - Development and promotion of traditional African Sports and its placement in the Calendar of International Sports; and
 - Promotion and entrenchment of African values in sports.

1.5 Guidelines and Expected Outcomes

This Policy

- represents the shared vision and goals of all ECOWAS Member States and Governmental jurisdictions for sport and challenges the sport community to share in their achievement;
- urges that ECOWAS sport people of all ages and abilities enjoy a broad range of sport experiences, enriched by the presence of dedicated and qualified volunteers, coaches, and staff;
- emphasizes increased communication and collaboration amongst all the stakeholders;
- commits all governments to setting targets for enhanced participation and performance in sport in collaboration with their respective sport confederations, federations, organizations and communities;
- commits Member State governments to strengthen their regular and formal communication with their respective sport confederations, federations, organizations and communities on issues affecting sport and in particular to strengthening the fight against doping in sport notably by supporting the regional and national anti-doping agencies;
- contains complimentary proposed strategies and activities for National Plans of Action for sport development for implementation by Governments collectively and individually, bi-laterally and multilaterally, and by each sport community;
- promotes programmes which will meet the needs of all sport people and spectators; and
- Contributes to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

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The Sport Policy is anticipated to produce the following outcomes:

- The majority of ECOWAS citizens will share a sense of citizenship and quality of life through an increase in participation in sports;
- The sports system will ensure that ECOWAS citizens of all ages and abilities enjoy a broad range of sports experiences, enriched by the presence of dedicated and qualified volunteers, coaches, and staff;
- ECOWAS citizens will be recognized internationally for their excellence in national and international competitions and for their leadership in sports and social development through sport in Africa and abroad; and
- Sport systems in ECOWAS Member States will focus on meeting the needs of athletes and participants.

2. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS ON MEMBER STATES

Further to the mentioned research activities employed in the development of the Policy, the analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) relating to Sport in the Member States, were established as follows:

STRENGTHS

1. Political will (Decisions of Heads of States)
2. Supportive Legal framework (Art.22, 23, 61 of the Revised ECOWAS Treaty)
3. Existence of ECOWAS Conference of Ministers for Sports
4. Supportive Commission

WEAKNESSES

1. Ineffective transportation network
2. Absence of sport policies and instruments
3. Inadequate funding
4. Lack of capacities and competencies
5. Inadequate empowerment of sport administrators
6. Existing barriers to active

with required institutional structure

5. Abundance of talents and skills
6. Availability of Institutional capacity (Youth Development Centre)
7. Existence of regional and national sport associations
8. Existence of sports infrastructure and training centres and facilities for Elite Sports
9. Practicing of traditional sports
10. Existence of protocol for free movement of people, goods and services
11. Existence of media
12. Good relations with and representation in continental and international sport organisations
13. Efficient stakeholders networks
14. Past and present sports heroes
15. Sustained Government funding for sports

participation

7. Dearth of information and data
 8. Lack of proper sports management
 9. Inadequate technology
 10. Lack of adequate sponsorship
 11. Inadequate professional approach to procuring sponsorship
 12. Gender inequality
 13. Inadequate and inappropriate sports facilities
 14. Inefficient communication system
 15. Paucity of research in sports
 16. Inadequate access for people with special needs
- Prevalence of HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis

OPPORTUNITIES

1. More effective harnessing of media services
 2. Hosting of international sporting events
 3. Opportunities for resource mobilisation
 4. Strengthening of relationships between governments, national and international sports organisations
 5. Attraction of funding from donors and development partners
 6. Large youthful population
 7. Development of traditional sports
 8. Human resources capacity building
 9. Opportunity for integration
- Opportunity for people with special needs to participate in sport

THREATS

1. Lack of efficient sports management
2. Political instability
3. Drainage of talents and skills to developed countries
4. Drug abuse and doping in sports
5. Increasing Anti-social behaviours in sport
6. Distraction from local sport by strong attraction of international sporting events
7. Declining interest of able and willing Sportsmen and women

3. STAKEHOLDERS AND BENEFICIARIES OF THE POLICY

Collaboration between the ECOWAS Commission, Member States and relevant Government Agencies, the Private Sector, African Union Commission, and National, Regional and International Sport Organisations (e.g. IOC, FIFA, CONFEJES, Commonwealth, WAFU), UNESCO and other specialised UN Agencies, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), Civil Society Organisations, the media, Professional Associations and traditional authorities, among other stakeholders, is called for in the Policy.

The beneficiaries will be athletes, sports administrators, sports supporters and ultimately the citizens of the region.

Successful implementation of the Sport Policy and its Strategic Plan of Action will require effective interaction between stakeholders, resulting in strengthened political leadership in Member States in the domain of sport and greater accountability on the part of all stakeholders and beneficiaries.

4. THE ECOWAS SPORT POLICY ORIENTATION

Recommended priority areas for Sport development in the Region

In view of the important role of sport in regional integration and economic development, the ECOWAS Sport Policy calls for the following priorities in planning and judicious allocation of resources for sport in the region.

4. 1. Sports for All

Promotion of Sports for All and physical activity initiatives within Member States which would constitute the integrated approach to the development of sports in the region. This would require strong political commitment and support at all levels as an essential prerequisite for ECOWAS leaders in the promotion of health, fitness, well-being and sporting excellence of ECOWAS citizens to be adapted to people of all ages, gender and of different social and economic conditions, regardless of local and regional cultures.

4.2. Sports and the promotion of equal opportunities for women

In tandem with the ECOWAS Gender Policy, the Sport Policy strongly highlights the different needs and equal opportunities for women through sports, for example access to public spaces where women can gather, develop new skills together, gain support from others and enjoy freedom of expression and movement. It can promote education, communication, negotiation skills and leadership, all of which are essential for women's empowerment.

4.3. Sport for economic and infrastructure development

Sport for economic and infrastructure development of ECOWAS is amplified by this policy, by calling for support to entrepreneurs for the manufacture of sporting goods, the development of sport-related services, infrastructure and sports events. Additionally, sport shall produce indirect economic effects in the region by improving the overall health of people, thereby contributing to reduction in spending on health, while increasing labour productivity.

Considering that sport is a significant sector of the economies, the sport industry shall be supported in the region, as it can account for a significant percentage of Gross Domestic Product and jobs,

similar to that of agriculture and industrial sectors.

Development of Sport in the ECOWAS Region requires balanced significant investment in the sport infrastructure. As sports generate substantial revenues, both from professional sports and hosting national or international events, ECOWAS Member States are urged to plough back, develop and maintain sport infrastructure with the view to create jobs. Hosting sports events can also have a long-term impact on local and regional economies, especially in the aspect of sports tourism.

4.4 Sports and youth development

Contribution to the **development of the youth** through sport constitutes a critical priority in this policy. Sport brings the youth into contact with each other and other communities, teach leadership skills, provide a constructive outlet, and generally enhance quality of life for the youth. Sports facilitate the development of citizenship awareness and dissemination of ECOWAS principles and objectives. Social capital is built by learning to organize meetings, negotiate for the use of shared facilities, and deal with expectations, triumphs and failures. In addition, it provides for a popular spectatorship and recreational activities

4.5. Traditional sports

Traditional sports and games which are part of the cultural heritage are prioritised in this policy as sport is an important component of culture in the ECOWAS region. People express themselves and celebrate their communities through traditional sports and games. People share stories, myths, and lessons derived from traditional sports. Through sport people learn values and behaviors that are applied to all aspects of society – friendship, hard work, discipline, excellence, and respect for others.

4.6. Ethics in sports

The ECOWAS Sport Policy strongly emphasises ethics in sport such as fairness, health and safety and the avoidance of doping, harassment, abuse, intolerance and violence. Doping in sport poses a continuous threat to the wellbeing of athletes from the region, apart from the foul play component of the use of performance enhancing drugs. Hence, this policy calls for Member States to ratify the UNECSO Convention against Doping in Sports, and protect those who commit themselves to doping free sports.

4.7. Sports for development and peace

Sport activities in geographic areas divided by war and deep-rooted hostility constitute an ideal forum for stimulating social dialogue and encouraging exchange, as well as providing an atmosphere conducive for implementing conflict resolution and reconciliation programmes. In the ECOWAS region, sport can bring people together in ways that cut across boundaries and break down barriers allowing different groups to interact and exchange ideas. This policy therefore, emphasizes the importance of sport in the service of social development and peace.

4.8. Sports and health

Promotion of healthy lifestyles for the prevention of non-communicable diseases among citizens of the ECOWAS region is called for in this policy, as physical activity is fundamental to positive human development and contributes to healthy, long and more productive lives. Research has shown that participation in sports and physical activity at all ages can help prevent and manage non-communicable diseases such as cardio-vascular diseases, cancer, diabetes, obesity, mental disorders and HIV/AIDS.

4.9. Sports and education

The first point of contact and exposure to sports for the average person is at school. This is where the basics of recreational activity and physical education must be inculcated. It is a fundamental objective of the education system to nurture an inquiring mind in a fit body and the future emergence of excellence in sports will depend on the development of a structured approach to sports in school that involves all the stakeholders in education, including higher educational institutions. The Policy therefore seeks to ensure the monitoring of sport and physical education as compulsory integral part of the school and college curricula in compliance with international instruments.

4.10 Sports and persons with special needs

This Policy urges stakeholders to provide conditions that will enable persons with special needs in the region to use their abilities as individuals or in association with others to not only practise sports, but also to contribute to the development of sport and to be self-supporting by participating in different sport events, skills training, gainful employment opportunities and other services.

4.11. Sports and sustainable environment

The Policy calls for actions to counteract the impact on the environment aimed at the upholding of ethical issues and preventing social degradations and unwholesome practices in the sports environment thereby fostering sustainability of the environment.

4.12 Sports award and recognition of excellence

Sports men and women significantly contribute to building a positive image and foster patriotism in their respective countries and the region, and should hence be valued, recognised and rewarded.

5. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

The implementation of this policy shall be based on the following statements:

5.1 Human Resources

5.1.1 Capacity building and human resource development

This policy seriously opposes the soliciting of sport talents and professional and administrative skills from the Region to join programmes in developed countries and areas on the Continent to seek laurels overseas. Opportunities for talented youngsters should be created in regional training centres to limit the drain of sports talents abroad.

Due to the lack of training facilities, scholarship opportunities and career incentives for ECOWAS citizens to specialise in the administrative, technical and scientific areas of sport, a significant backlog of sport professionals has built up over time. Hence, the policy highlights the need for establishment of facilities for the training of sportsmen, administrators, technicians and scientists, construed as the backbone of the development strategy.

5.1.2 Leadership training and partnership development

For the development of sport in the region, leadership skills need to be developed among athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, sport federations, the private sector and entrepreneurs, and in various levels of Government. In addition, the capacity for partnerships, based on trust, needs to be fostered between the same individuals and organizations as it will support the implementation of the policy. This will entail accountability training for transparency, measurement of results and performance against objectives.

5.2 Financial Resources

5.2.1 Funding

The resource mobilization efforts for implementation of the ECOWAS Sport Policy shall be based upon the following sources.

5.2.2 ECOWAS Source of funding

There shall be established an ECOWAS fund for sports development as the primary source of fund mobilisation for the implementation of sports development aspects of this policy document.

5.2.3 Government budgetary provisions

Although national budgets normally include both recurrent and capital expenditure provisions for sports activities, the challenges common to all Member States are the inadequacy of the funds allocated to sports, or the inability to access the funds as and when they are required. This is a major inhibitive factor to the growth and development of sports in the sub-region.

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In order to attain regional goals with regard to sports, government budgetary allocations for sports shall be enhanced and funds for training and re-training of sportsmen and women, as well as capacity building for sports administrators and managers will be released timely.

5.2.4 Development partners and donor agencies

Development partners and donor agencies have evidently not made the desired impact on policy formulation, programme execution and appropriate feedback for the development of sports in the region. This may be due to the lack of soliciting proactive suggestions from cooperating partners on the management and administration of sports in member states. The region has also not engaged with cooperating partners on adequate funding targets for sports, sponsorship and promotional endeavours.

Regional and national sport policies and programmes should recognise the roles and contributions of donor organizations and agencies. This could be done by compiling a directory of stakeholder partners and agencies to ensure systematic eliciting, documenting and recognising of their inputs at the primary stages of sport policy and programme formulation.

5.2.5 Donations, sponsorships and volunteerism

Donations and sponsorships by individuals and corporate bodies for the development of sports should elicit tax reliefs or holidays in order to encourage prospective sponsors. Contributions in kind, like voluntary work, should also be encouraged.

5.2.6 Private Sector

The private sector would be strongly included as special partner of the State in the development of sports policies and programmes.

6. Institutional framework for the implementation of the policy

The ECOWAS sports policy accompanied by the strategic action plan 2011 - 2020 shall involve all stakeholders in sports (athletes/participants, coaches, officials, communities, organisations, institutions, governments etc) in the implementation.

6.1 The ECOWAS Commission

The ECOWAS Commission has the mandate to play a harmonisation, coordination and advocacy role with regard to sport in the region. This includes mobilization of resources, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of ECOWAS Declarations, Decisions, and Programmes on Sport, including the Sport Policy and for the dissemination of best practices and harmonization of policies and strategies to promote sport effectively in the ECOWAS region.

The ECOWAS Commission, through its Youth and Sports Development Centre, will ensure that member states's Governments support the development of sports systems through national sports organizations, national sports centres, multi-sports organizations, the demonstration of strong political will and the funding of sports programmes and activities.

The ECOWAS Commission shall:

- Facilitate the hosting of regional and international events;
- Ensure access to essential services needed by persons with special needs;
- Support policy and programme implementation among Member States and governments;
- Promote regional sports and raise awareness of the values imbedded in sport; and
- Mobilise resources for the implementation of sports programmes and events, at the grass roots level through elite levels.

6.2 Member States

Member State Governments will support the implementation of the Policy by systematically incorporating relevant components of the Policy into their annual Plans of Action. Member States will furthermore advocate for resource mobilization and budgetary provisions as a demonstration of ownership, and conduct monitoring and evaluation on the implementation of the Policy. Member States will promote civil society and private sector participation in national and regional sport programmes.

Specifically member states shall;

- Incorporate the ECOWAS Day Run in their annual sports calendar and ensure national participation of all stakeholders as enumerated in the Policy

Enunciate interventionist sports programmes in clear cases of gender discrimination.

Bid for ECOWAS Games and other ECOWAS Community Sports

Participate in ECOWAS Games and other Community sports where and when they are staged

Create National Paralympic Sports Committee for persons with Special needs

6.3 National and International Sports Federations

National and international sport federations and other development partners are to align their financial and technical assistance and cooperation plans with national and regional needs and priorities for implementation of the ECOWAS Sport Policy.

National Sports Federations shall

Give priority of participation at sports events to sporting activity in the ECOWAS region

Institutionalise more sports and games activities within the region while increasing the frequency of mounting same.

Conduct training aimed at improving capacity of sports personnel within the ECOWAS region

International Sports Federations shall

- Support the creation of National Paralympics sports committee in ECOWAS Member States and give necessary support in areas of equipment and facility development
- Provide technical support to Federations organising sports training programmes
- Support the interventionist programmes enunciated by member states in clear cases of gender discrimination
- Give necessary funding and support

6.4 Other Regional Bodies and Communities

Through bilateral and multilateral agreements, ECOWAS shall seek to collaborate with other regional bodies, such as the African Union Commission, CONFEJES, Commonwealth, WAFU and United Nations System to promote peace, security, health, physical well being and economic development through sports.

6.5 Sharing of best practices

ECOWAS through this sports policy shall encourage research on best practices on sporting activities, networking and information sharing among Member States to promote excellence in sports



7. POPULARISATION AND PROMOTION OF THE ECOWAS SPORTS POLICY

The ECOWAS Commission and Member States shall undertake to popularise and promote the Policy and its strategic Plan of Action in view of sensitising all stakeholders and the general public

8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY AND ITS STRATEGIC PLAN OF ACTION

A Monitoring and Evaluation Committee is hereby established in accordance with the provisions of Article 23 of the Revised ECOWAS Treaty to monitor, evaluate and coordinate the implementation of the provisions of the Sports Policy. ECOWAS shall collaborate with Member States, National and International Sport Federations, development partners, regional bodies and communities to ensure effective and efficient administration and implementation of this policy.

9. AMENDMENT AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY

This policy shall be due for review and amendment every ten (10) years from the date of its adoption or such a time as deem fit by the ECOWAS Ministers of Youth and Sports or upon the recommendation of the ECOWAS Commission.



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