

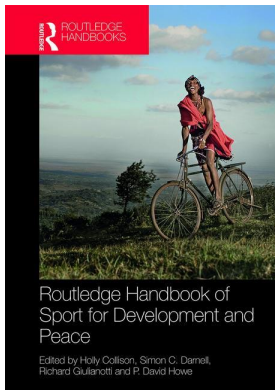
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# SDP and global development

David Black

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## Introduction

How do sport and global development relate to each other? Though sport is often portrayed as a new entrant to the field of global development, this portrayal is increasingly untenable. Leaving aside the much longer history of sport as an instrument of personal, social, community, and national development, stretching back to the nineteenth century (Kidd 2008), the contemporary upsurge of intentional interventions in development through sport is now roughly a generation old. A growing array of organizations, varying in shape, size, and type, have demonstrated staying power in the competitive landscape of global development (see [www.sportanddev.org](http://www.sportanddev.org); [www.beyondsport.org/Network](http://www.beyondsport.org/Network)), while a robust body of scholarship has emerged to critically analyse this phenomenon (e.g. Burnett 2009; Darnell 2012; Coalter 2013; Hayhurst 2015). It is therefore time to take stock of some of the key characteristics of sport for development (SFD) praxis in relation to the broader field of global development.

This chapter:

- 1) Sketches the broad contours and recent trajectory of global development theory and practice, emphasizing the long-standing distinction between 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' orientations, and more recent efforts to transcend these orientations through 'multi-stakeholder partnerships'.
- 2) Situates SFD in relation to these dynamics, arguing that while SFD may be a relatively 'new' field in relation to the post-Second World War history of global development, it has been in the *forefront* of the new, multi-stakeholder politics of 'partnership'.
- 3) Discusses the ways in which top-down and bottom-up manifestations of SFD have been connected, giving particular attention to the example of sports mega-events.
- 4) Explores the potential for more equitable forms of engagement between top-down and bottom-up orientations in SFD.

I will argue that, more than most forms of development praxis, SFD has been characterized by relatively close – indeed co-dependent – connections between top-down and bottom-up dynamics. The challenge faced by scholars and practitioners is not the *lack* of connections, but

rather their *form* and *effects*. The relationship between top-down and bottom-up manifestations of SFD can be described as an inequitable symbiosis. While there have been clear advantages to actors from both 'sides' as a result of this situation, it has also limited the role and relevance of sport in addressing the structural inequities, or 'root causes' that underpin persistent poverty, inequality, and marginalization. SFD actors need to develop a better understanding of the structural differences between these orientations, a higher level of critical distance between top-down and bottom-up SFD actors, and a closer relationship between bottom-up SFD and actors in other development domains (e.g. health, education, disability, or anti-poverty).

## Understanding the dynamics of global development praxis

In order to make this argument, we must briefly enter the murky waters of development theory and practice. To be sure, the meanings of development are diverse and contested. To make sense of this confusing *mélange*, the idea of top-down versus bottom-up development helps capture two broad orientations that have consistently co-existed throughout the post-Second World War history of the modern 'development project'. This project is distinguished from earlier eras by the emergence of an extensive network of national, international, and civil society organizations with the expressed intent of instigating, enabling, or supporting development in the 'global South' (see Black 2010; Payne and Phillips 2010).

The ideas of top-down and bottom-up development have been used in a variety of ways. Most obviously, they refer to the *actors and the levels of analysis* emphasized in development thought and practice, distinguishing the priorities of national, intergovernmental, and corporate development actors from those of local communities and grassroots, small-scale, or 'community-based' organizations in civil society. A variation on this spatial sense of the term derives from the distinction between the global North and South, or colonizer and post-colonial. In this context, developing country governments have often taken on the mantle of the 'sub-altern' to challenge the entrenched privileges of rich countries in the global North. This spatial or agential distinction has been closely related to a *methodological distinction* between large-scale quantitative and/or theoretical trends and approaches to development, on the one hand, and small-scale qualitative and participatory methods, on the other.

In addition, however, the top-down/bottom-up distinction can be understood as a normative and prescriptive division concerning the *process and objectives* of development, and the actions required to enable these processes and objectives. In other words, development can be seen in a fundamentally liberal or 'problem solving' sense of enabling people, communities, and/or countries to adapt, succeed, and prosper in the world *as it is*. Alternatively, it can be understood in a more radical or 'critical' sense of addressing the structural roots of poverty, inequality, and marginalization, emphasizing the need to restructure or *transform* the current order. This latter orientation can be understood as 'bottom-up' in the sense that it aims to see the world from the perspective of historically marginalized groups, and to act in partnership or solidarity with them.<sup>1</sup>

Two caveats need to be entered about these broad orientations. First, *neither* orientation assumes the viability of the status quo. *Both* understand development as a process of far-reaching social change. The key difference concerns the question of social change *how, and for whom?* In other words, who are the principle architects and beneficiaries of the development process?

Second, beyond the bottom-up orientation I have sketched, there is a well-known 'hyper-critical' orientation that sees 'development' as irredeemably colonial and exploitative. From this perspective, development praxis cannot be rescued, but must be transcended. In development studies, this is typically characterized as a 'post' or 'anti-development' orientation (e.g. Escobar

1995; Rist 2014). Because the prescriptions that flow from it tend to be vague and impractical, as well as hostile to the very idea of development, it cannot be easily accommodated within development praxis. But this hyper-critical orientation has significantly influenced ‘bottom-up’ development thinking, through its critique of existing development practices and its efforts to address the problems highlighted by these critiques. It has sharpened understanding of social power, inequity, and marginalization in development, and thus helped ‘bottom-up’ approaches understand what needs to change.

How have these differences played out in the ‘real world’? Since the early 1980s, much attention has focused on the ongoing distinction between market-oriented, rational choice, or neoliberal development approaches on the one hand, and more interventionist and participatory, ‘alternative’ or ‘human development’ perspectives on the other (Pieterse 2010). Some time ago, Jean-Philippe Thérien (1999) neatly captured these alternative perspectives as ‘two tales of world poverty’, which he termed the Bretton Woods and the UN paradigms respectively. Of course, neither of these perspectives has remained static. For example, the harshly neoliberal ‘Washington consensus’ of the 1990s became the softer, gentler but still neoliberal ‘post-Washington consensus’ of the 2000s (Onis and Senses 2005). But debates and practices concerning global development were more or less aligned with one or the other of these orientations.

As I have already suggested, these orientations have been evident ever since ‘development’ was institutionalized as a global priority in the late 1940s and early 1950s. In the first development decades, top-down development was mostly reflected in modernization approaches, ranging from an emphasis on infrastructure and ‘big push’ interventions, up to and including the Basic Human Needs approach promoted by the World Bank in the 1970s. Modernization approaches have never really gone away, as reflected in the renewed emphasis on large-scale infrastructure projects.

The bottom-up orientation was more diverse, including structuralist, dependency, and other neo-Marxist approaches emphasizing (and seeking to change) entrenched divisions of wealth and class, but also small-scale and grassroots approaches like the Buddhist economics of E. F. Schumacher (1973) emphasizing that ‘Small is Beautiful’. Taken together, however, they stressed the need to challenge the structural roots of poverty and inequality, and the importance of solidarity with those who were exploited by prevailing global structures of power, wealth, and knowledge.

In the new millennium, however, global development praxis has been complicated by a concerted effort by various development actors, both state and non-state, to promote a grand, pragmatic synthesis between these two orientations. This is consistent with the ‘Third Way’ politics that rose to prominence in the ‘developed’ countries of Western Europe and North America during the 1990s and 2000s (see also Kapur 1999). It can be loosely characterized as ‘big tent’ development. The general argument is that development is ‘too important’ to politicize, and that there is a need for new and intensified ‘multi-stakeholder partnerships’ to enhance coordination, exploit complementarities, and unlock new sources of development finance. Development can, and should, be ‘rendered technical’ (Li 2007) – a set of interlinked problems to be solved through the application of technical knowledge. This attempt to depoliticize development is, ironically, deeply political.

There are many factors that have contributed to this dynamic. They include a proliferation of ‘new’ development actors in the post-Cold War era, including a dramatic expansion in the number of non-governmental development organizations (or ‘tamed social movements’ – Kaldor 2003); the rise of new donors from both an expanded EU and the ‘rising states’ of the global South, such as the BRICS<sup>2</sup> states; and the rising salience of corporations, corporate social responsibility, and ‘new philanthropists’ like the Gates Foundation, leading

to a dramatic growth in public–private partnerships (Black and O’Bright 2016). They also include an increasingly assertive ‘global South’, emboldened by the rise of the BRICs and others, and by their recovery from the debt crisis and structural adjustment conditionalities of the 1980s and 1990s. The growing range of development actors has underpinned the push towards big tent development in several ways: by intensifying challenges of competition and coordination; by introducing new development agendas; and by broadening the sources of development finance in ways that greatly appeal to traditional development actors in an era of fiscal restraint.

This new global politics of development partnership has been anchored by a series of landmark international agreements, including the Millennium Development Goals (2000), the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action on Aid Effectiveness (2005 and 2008), and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (2011) (Picciotto 2011). Most recently, this process has led to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in September 2015. The SDGs are unprecedented in their breadth and ambition, combining the UN’s Sustainable Development and Social Development agendas to arrive at a set of 17 Goals and 169 targets (in contrast with the 8 goals and 18 targets of the MDGs). They are also unprecedented in their objective of encompassing *all* countries, North and South, rather than just ‘low-income countries’. Their supporters stress these as virtues, whereas their detractors see the breadth and ambition of the SDGs as ‘Senseless, Dreamy, and Garbled’ (Easterly 2015). To be at all feasible, they will require development finance on a scale far beyond even the most optimistic projections for traditional foreign aid. In this sense, they strongly reinforce the assumed need for multi-stakeholder partnerships, since they will depend on new sources of development finance, largely from corporations and private philanthropists. Finally, and most relevant to this chapter, they encompass an improbable combination of traditional, top–down (or neoliberal) development through dramatically accelerated growth, and a bottom–up emphasis on ‘no one left behind’, along with the need for decisive action on the climate crisis in ways that cannot be easily imagined without dramatically curtailing global growth.

### SFD in global development

It is in this ambiguous context, marked by the continued co–existence of top–down and bottom–up orientations along with a concerted effort to foster a grand development synthesis, that SFD has risen to prominence. How are we to situate the groups concerned with sport’s role in development in relation to the broader politics of global development?

A first key observation is that, like other fields of development praxis, the hundreds of non-governmental SFD organizations and initiatives run the ideological, institutional, organizational, and financial gamut from small, informal, loosely organized and/or highly radical to large, formal, hierarchically structured and/or richly financed, with sophisticated public relations machines and celebrity ‘athlete ambassadors’. They also vary in their closeness to SFD actors in governmental, intergovernmental, and international sport organizations (notably the IOC and FIFA) on the one hand, and multinational corporations and private philanthropists, on the other. Richard Giulianotti (2011) distinguishes four ‘domains’ of Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) actors: a neoliberal domain, closely linked to transnational corporations and their corporate social responsibility activities; developmental interventionist actors, consisting of mainstream non-governmental and community-based organizations; strategic developmental actors associated with national governments, intergovernmental organizations like the UN and the Commonwealth, and international sports federations like the IOC, FIFA, and FIBA; and finally new social movements and radical non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that

gravitate towards confrontation and social mobilization to challenge corporate, international sport organization (ISO), and governmental authority and priorities. These categories, or domains, sit on a fluid continuum. Organizations often operate closely across these boundaries, sometimes within ‘multi-stakeholder partnerships’. But only the fourth category of new social movements and radical NGOs consistently adopts a bottom-up orientation, with some developmental interventionist actors leaning this way, both ideologically and in practice.

Second, the distinction between top-down and bottom-up orientations tends to be less clear-cut in SFD than in other domains of development praxis. This is partly because sport-oriented groups are, on the whole, less self-consciously *political*. In this sense, the ‘myth of autonomy’ (Allison 1993: 5–6) concerning sport and politics remains influential, with sport still widely seen as a space for ‘escape from’ politics. This helps to explain the attraction of SFD to states and corporations, since it is consistent with the idea that development is something that can be ‘rendered technical’ and to which all right-thinking people should be able to agree. But the general point is that, on the whole, there is a fluid and permeable boundary between grassroots and community-based groups, on the one hand, and high-powered corporate, governmental, and sporting organizations, on the other. Even those groups that are not at all linked to elite athletes, sport organizations, or corporate sponsors are often *inspired by* the sporting heroes who have frequently risen from humble beginnings, and the wealthy franchises, supporters, and corporate sponsors they are aligned with. Thus, top-down and bottom-up manifestations of SFD are often closely connected, even though top-down tendencies typically predominate.

Third, and building on the permeability between top-down and bottom-up orientations in SFD, this domain of development praxis is particularly well suited to the new landscape of ‘big tent’ development partnerships. SFD has often been thought of as somehow immature or underdeveloped in relation to the development field as a whole. Yet in its pervasive co-mingling of top-down and bottom-up orientations, it has been in the *forefront* of development actors, modelling the sort of multi-stakeholder partnerships between ‘grassroots’ organizations, private sector sponsors, elite sports leagues and federations, and governmental and intergovernmental organizations in ways that mainstream development thinkers and practitioners are increasingly advocating.

Why has this been the case? As noted above, many SFD actors have been less attuned to the political nature of development work than actors in other sectors. Traditional development organizations in civil society are often explicitly motivated by theoretical, ideological and/or normative viewpoints that lead them to ‘keep their distance’ from top-down development actors, and/or to pursue some variation of ‘insider’ vs ‘outsider’ strategies of engagement and advocacy with the latter (Nelson 2006). These decisions usually reflect considerable self-reflection. SFD organizations and practitioners, on the other hand, are typically less preoccupied with these strategic calculations, and more with ‘getting on with the work’. Many SFD leaders are less well schooled in the structural origins of poverty and inequality, but deeply invested in the redemptive appeal of sport, particularly for those who have been immersed in it.

The timing of the rise of the SFD sector is also important. Most contemporary SFD organizations are post-Cold War inventions. They were products of the period when Francis Fukuyama (1992) famously declared that history had ‘ended’, with the big ideological cleavages resolved in favour of liberalism. This view was always controversial, and now seems extraordinarily naïve, but unlike earlier development decades marked by sharp divisions among alternative designs for human improvement, the ‘era of SFD’ has lacked this clarity of ideological and practical alternatives.

Finally, the new grassroots push in SFD has come at the same time as leading top-down actors, particularly in the international sport and corporate worlds, have recognized the appeal



of development as the latest manifestation of the long-standing emphasis on 'sport for good'. In this sense, ISOs and their major corporate sponsors have embraced inclusive social and sustainable development as the latest adaptation in their ongoing need to sustain the social legitimacy of sport and, by extension, themselves (Peacock 2011). As these increasingly rich and powerful top-down actors take up the 'cause' of SFD, many SFD 'start-ups' find their offers of publicity, capacity, and financial support irresistible.

### **The 'unequal symbiosis' between top-down and bottom-up orientations in SFD**

As noted above, there is a diverse array of SFD actors. Scholars still need to better understand the full range of these actors and their activities, while tracking the way in which the sector is growing and changing (see Donnelly *et al.* 2011, 592). In doing so, they need to be mindful of the degree to which SFD scholarship has been heavily concentrated in a narrow range of countries, mostly in Europe, North America, and Australasia (Schulenkorf *et al.* 2016), and thus encompasses a relatively narrow range of perspectives. In general, however, top-down and bottom-up (or grassroots) actors in SFD seem to be more co-dependent than actors in other sectors of global development.

From the perspective of bottom-up or community-based actors, we need to recognize that SFD organizations are still 'late adopters' – late into the complex and multi-dimensional politics of global development, and the diverse and competitive arena of development actors. As relative newcomers, frequently with limited networks and sources of public funding (Kidd 2008: 376), they have felt compelled to lean on their greatest assets, which are often the profile and resources provided by their links to high-performance sports organizations, clubs, and celebrity athletes. It is no accident, for example, that one of the best known and most successful SFD organizations, the Mathare Youth Sports Association (MYSA), was from the outset determined to attach itself to elite sport through the creation of a MYSA United side in the Kenyan Premier league – a measure which, in the view of founder Bob Munro, not only provided profile and role models, but a measure of financial and political security in the vulnerable conditions of urban slums.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, it can be argued that one of the strategic assets of new and relatively vulnerable SFD organizations is *precisely* that they are typically regarded as relatively *less* political, and therefore threatening, than more traditional development and human rights organizations, especially those supported by international 'partners'. This has become an increasingly important consideration as a wave of governments in the global South have imposed stringent regulations on the activities of internationally 'partnered' civil society organizations (CSOs), particularly when these activities are perceived as political advocacy and policy work (Clarke and Mehta 2015). The universalistic and redemptive veneer of sport and play, in contrast, is a source of security and protection as SFD organizations seek to consolidate their programmes and presence, which they will be intuitively reluctant to surrender.

For top-down SFD actors on the other hand – notably leading ISOs and corporate sponsors – a close association with grassroots sport and development partially mitigates and obscures the growing wealth, elitism, entitlement, and corruption that has challenged their 'brand' and thus their legitimacy. ISOs, in particular, have become increasingly sought after as 'partners'. This is evident in their attractiveness to wealthy corporate sponsors, leading politicians pitching sports mega-events (SMEs), and UN and other international organizations seeking strategic relationships (e.g. [www.olympic.org/cooperation-with-the-un](http://www.olympic.org/cooperation-with-the-un)). Yet they are also vulnerable, depending on the willingness of powerful state and corporate actors to acquiesce in their unique status as the governors of world sport. As noted above, their ability to navigate this distinctive combination of

wealth, influence, and vulnerability depends on the legitimacy of their ‘movements’ – most obviously Olympism, but also, more broadly, the noble ideals associated with elite sports and sporting events (see Hoberman 1995; Peacock 2011). As a result, both bottom-up and top-down actors in SFD have a compelling interest in sustaining their complementarities and obscuring their differences. In short, their relationship is symbiotic; yet it is also deeply unequal, with top-down actors and interests routinely predominating.

### The unequal symbiosis of SFD in practice: the case of SMEs

Nowhere is this unequal symbiosis more evident than in the dynamics surrounding contemporary SMEs. On the one hand, the neoliberal SME – ascendant since the Los Angeles Olympics of 1984 – has in many respects become the ultimate ‘top-down’ development device. It offers a strategic opportunity for national, regional, and urban development that attracts a confluence of elite and tenuously accountable ISOs, ambitious politicians, and private sector interests in powerful ‘booster coalitions’. These events institutionalize ‘states of exception’ – virtual peacetime states of emergency – that enable dramatic acceleration of the preferred development schemes of local and national elites, through exceptional governance arrangements and their extraordinary capacity for capital mobilization (Gaffney 2014; Pentifallo 2015). On the other hand, these bids and hosts, particularly in the ‘rising states’ that have aggressively pursued them (e.g. Brazil, South Africa, India, South Korea, China, Mexico, Malaysia), have increasingly stressed their ‘sustainable’ and ‘inclusive’ development benefits for the society as a whole. It has become virtually impossible to justify hosting these events in the global South without invoking their ‘bottom-up’ benefits. Moreover, they have been associated with rapid growth in the number of ‘grassroots’ organizations and initiatives seeking to use the SME ‘space’ to advance community-based programmes and projects. Some of these bottom-up actors and initiatives are the direct result of elite ISO sponsorship (e.g. Football for Hope); others are local initiatives seeking to exploit the opportunities triggered by the SME-linked state of exception (e.g. the Football Foundation of South Africa in Gansbaai). But either way, they have sought to activate the bottom-up potential of top-down sport (e.g. Cornelissen 2011; Swart *et al.* 2011).

These tendencies are by no means confined to hosts from the global South; both the London and Vancouver Olympic Games featured urban renewal, social inclusion, and sustainable development initiatives, for example. Nevertheless, SMEs in rising states both promote and confront heightened developmental claims and expectations (e.g. Carey *et al.* 2011; Millington and Darnell 2014). To justify the extraordinary costs and efforts associated with SME hosting in the global South, it has become necessary to claim that the poor majority will be major, if not principal, beneficiaries.

What can we say about the *actual* developmental impacts of SMEs in ‘rising states’? The question is not easily answered, as such events always generate ‘multiple narratives’ (Kidd 2009/10), and enable many small-scale SFD activities and initiatives. However, if we were to try to summarize their ‘bottom-up’ developmental impacts, we would have to conclude that:

- the emphasis and expenditures on ‘grassroots’ and inclusionary undertakings are dwarfed by the effort required to achieve ‘top-down’ objectives (Cornelissen 2011);
- the more ‘pro-poor’ infrastructural priorities articulated in the bid stage are regularly displaced or downgraded in favour of the urgent need to complete elite sporting venues and the broader infrastructural developments required by local and international elites who are the primary consumers of the event; and



- no 'actually existing' SME has contributed decisively to the reduction of socio-economic inequalities, and sustained poverty alleviation, in host cities and countries.

The last point requires some qualification. Clearly, the overall developmental record of SMEs in rising states is mixed. Some, such as the 1988 Olympics in South Korea, are widely seen as a 'qualified success' (Bairner and Cho 2014), marking the country's 'graduation' from developing country status and acting as a stimulus to political liberalization. Others, such as South Africa (2010), have a more ambiguous balance sheet, with some advances in urban renewal and transportation infrastructure along with the symbolic victory of succeeding where failure was widely anticipated, but with a classic legacy of 'white elephant' venues and major opportunity costs relative to acute social needs. Still others, such as Mexico (1968), Delhi (2010), and Brazil (2016), have been widely associated with setbacks in the developmental ambitions of their political and economic backers (Zolov 2004; Baviskar 2010; Wade 2017). In no case, however, can these events be seen to have successfully generated inclusive, redistributive effects, to the benefit of the relatively disadvantaged majority.<sup>4</sup> In short, what 'bottom-up' successes may have been associated with these events are hard not to see as decorative 'window dressing' to their fundamentally top-down developmental consequences (Black and Northam 2015).

### *Towards more socially inclusive and sustainable SFD?*

Despite the tendency of SFD initiatives towards a symbiosis that favours top-down interests and priorities, there are some contemporary dynamics that *could* shift the balance towards more bottom-up, socially inclusive possibilities. There is nothing inevitable about this prospective re-balancing, but it is possible to identify some key *forces for* change, and dynamics among SFD actors that could have a bearing on the *direction of* change.

With regard to the forces of change, there are dynamics both within and beyond sport that have made the status quo of the past several decades increasingly untenable. Within sport, there is a growing crisis in the elite sport system and the ISOs that govern it (McAloon 2016). This is reflected in: the multiple crises accompanying the Rio Games cycle; the sharp decline in SME bidders, particularly (though not only) from the global South; the new wave of evidence concerning pervasive doping; and the deep corruption and leadership crises within FIFA, to cite only the most obvious examples. Taken together, these multiple challenges clearly undermine the legitimacy of elite sport. They also undermine the value of ISO 'brands', and thus their appeal to corporate sponsors. Leading ISOs – above all, the IOC and FIFA – must respond and, based on historic patterns, are likely to gravitate towards an emphasis on the latest normative currents of world society, including more socially and environmentally inclusive initiatives and 'legacies'. The current crisis therefore opens up the possibility, at least, of more truly developmental SMEs, concerned from the ground up with issues of social equity, inclusion, and poverty alleviation (Black and Northam 2015). ISOs must, of course, be held to account if such reforms are to be meaningful and sustainable. The role of bottom-up SFD organizations could be vital in doing so, as could elite 'athlete activists' who have been crucial to the rise of SFD but muted in their criticism of the bodies that govern their sports.

These sport-based crises are embedded within a much wider set of fissures and challenges in the global political economy, and a growing sense that existing structures, institutions, and social practices are increasingly unsustainable – ecologically, economically, socially, and politically. National and regional institutions are under strain (witness Brexit and the tremors within the EU); regional and global economies teeter on the brink of renewed crisis, while grappling with widening inequalities; unprecedented migrations of people are met by growing manifestations

of xenophobic intolerance; and the old ‘solutions’ to global crises of renewed growth and intensified resource exploitation deepen environmental stresses. The degree to which sport and sport-based organizations can, and should, play a meaningful role in addressing these kinds of ‘broad gauge problems’ (Coalter 2010) should not be overstated, but it is increasingly clear that these challenges cannot be adequately addressed on the strictly palliative basis that has characterized much SFD work. Sports people, like citizens everywhere, must become more attuned to these deep challenges, and the role their organizations and initiatives play in sustaining and/or challenging them.

Concerning the *direction of change*, In part because small-scale or grassroots SFD organizations have been relatively closely connected with top-down organizations within and beyond sport (Hayhurst and Frisby 2010), they have tended to be weakly connected with each other. Given both the sport-based and broader social challenges they confront, SFD organizations should give more attention to building coalitions of ‘like-minded’ groups in the sector, and in doing so, establish a greater degree of ‘critical distance’ from the top-down organizations (state, non-state, and corporate) with which they have been aligned (see Sanders 2016). By concerting their learning, analysis, and advocacy on a more systematic basis, these organizations’ ability to hold ‘top-down’ actors to account and to push for change – concerning the developmental implications of SMEs for example, or the need for more socially inclusive and transformative SFD programming – will be enhanced.

Finally, SFD organizations tend to be weakly connected with well-developed coalitions of non-state development actors in civil society more broadly. To cite just one example, there are no SFD organizations among the more than 80 development CSOs that compose the long-standing Canadian Council for International Cooperation.<sup>5</sup> Weak articulation with bottom-up actors in the wider development community militates against a better understanding of the nature of the challenges faced in other, co-related dimensions of global development work; a clearer appraisal of the role sport can play in relation to other development actors and challenges; and an enhanced profile for SFD beyond the realm of sport and popular culture. As SFD praxis matures therefore, it should aim for a fuller integration with the wider community of development CSOs, and a creative tension between bottom-up and top-down orientations in its own work and relationships.

## Notes

- 1 On the distinction between ‘problem solving’ and ‘critical’ theory, see Cox 1996.
- 2 Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.
- 3 I am indebted to Owen Willis for highlighting this point.
- 4 Space does not allow this point to be elaborated. On widening inequalities in post-apartheid South Africa, see Southall 2018. For contrasting assessments of the developmental legacies of the Rio Games, see Nolen 2016, and Wade 2017.
- 5 Though in fairness, it should be acknowledged that some CCIC members engage in some sport-based programming.

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