



ACCESS

Achieving Circularity in Cities through
Environmental Sustainability of Sports

DONATION OF SPORT EQUIPMENT, FURNITURE, VILLAGE ITEMS, VEHICLES, UNIFORMS AND SIGNAGE

Someone's used can be someone else's new



The environmental impact of sports equipment and materials is growing as the sector expands. Different sports require various equipment, which is often durable and reusable; however, strict standards for high-level games require continuous replacements. Donating sporting equipment allows lower-level or junior clubs to access functional gear that would otherwise be too expensive. Donation prevents materials from going to landfills or incineration, extending their life cycle through reuse.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE

A successful example of sport equipment donation is the work of the non-profit organization Levelling the Playing Field. Levelling Playing Field has been distributing sporting equipment to poorer communities for a value of \$12 million through donation centres located in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia, positively impacting over 100.000 children and youth athletes. The donations are housed at special distribution centres where families, coaches, athletic directors, program directors, and representatives can pick up whatever their kids need. The Philadelphia Eagles are one of the clubs that support LPF in their mission: Eagles players donated their sport equipment and helped to organize and take inventory of these items.

CHALLENGE

This practice addressed the environmental impacts linked to the use of materials and equipment.

Global consumption of materials has increased dramatically in a world of finite resources: during the 20th century, global materials use increased 8-fold, at about twice the rate of population growth.

This increasing consumption comes at a cost to the environment, including biodiversity loss, habitat destruction, overly stressed fisheries, desertification and climate change.

To reduce the environmental impact of materials and equipment, it is important to increase resource efficiency, recycling and reuse, as well as reducing the overall material consumption. To do so, we should look at the entire life cycle: from materials extraction to end-of-life management.

Reuse of materials is the absolute preferable option, right before recycling and composting. This practice addresses this challenge.

RESULTS

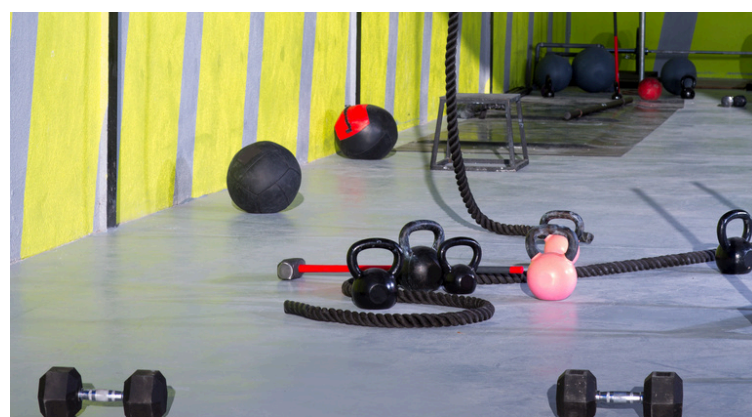
Donation prevents certain materials that are still in good condition from being thrown away thus reducing the amount of waste generated; at the same time, it allows to reduce the use of new raw materials to build new equipment because it simply extends the lifespan of the old equipment.

It is important to mention that in most cases the positive results of this practice are twofold: together with a reduction of the environmental impact, this operational practice has also a clear positive social return on local communities, as it helps other sport facilities that do not have the financial capacity to invest in new equipment and allows poorer communities to access sporting equipment, which is often too expensive, getting young people off the sidelines and onto the playing field.

REPLICABILITY POTENTIAL

The replicability potential of this practice is high once the event organisers establish relationships with specific stakeholders that put in place donation initiatives (charities, NGOs, organisers of future events, sport organisations). A proper awareness raising campaign to promote this practice would further boost its replicability.

No specific financial resources are needed apart from human resources (which are mainly in the form of volunteering) and the resources to transport the equipment and materials and redistribute them.





ACCESS

Achieving Circularity in Cities through
Environmental Sustainability of Sports

This factsheet is a part of a larger collection of good practices available on the project's website

www.access-cc.eu

Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them

The **ACCESS project** is one of the latest European projects which explores and challenges environmental sustainability and environmental management in sports. Co-funded by the European Union's Erasmus+ programme, ACCESS is looking at narrowing the gaps between the current environmental performances of sport organisations, their strategies, and practices on one side and strategies and targets of their respective cities or regions with the overall objective – making these sport organisations a reference point for sustainability in sports in their countries and turning them into replicators of solutions for achieving it.



Sant'Anna
School of Advanced Studies - Pisa



Co-funded by the
European Union