



Planning, resourcing and evaluating the response, recovery and long term impact of sport following COVID-19

1. The Commonwealth Ministerial Forum on Sport and COVID-19 was convened by video conference on 23 July 2020. Thirty-nine (39) countries and national delegations, represented by Ministers of Sport and senior officials, participated in the Forum along with leaders of the Commonwealth Sport movement and experts. The Forum was convened under the theme, *Planning, resourcing and evaluating the response, recovery and long-term impact of sport following COVID-19*. The session was facilitated by Kenya as the designated Chair for the 10th Commonwealth Sport Ministers Meeting (10CSMM).
2. Noting with concern the health, social and economic impact of the COVID-19 in Commonwealth countries, Ministers supported the outcomes of the virtual [32nd Commonwealth Health Ministers Meeting](#) (CHMM) held in May 2020. The CHMM emphasized the need for solidarity and cooperation in Commonwealth member states in response to the pandemic, the importance of addressing the needs of vulnerable groups and that an integrated multiagency and a multi-sectoral approach was essential, while upholding our fundamental principles of protecting and promoting democracy and human rights, and continuing to address key Commonwealth public health priorities.
3. Recognising that the pandemic has impacted all areas of society, including sport and physical activity, Ministers welcomed the opportunity the Forum provided to share learning and good practice on policies and approaches to sustainably resource sport and enable its contribution to social and economic development, as well as promoting physical activity and wellbeing in the context of COVID-19 and acknowledged the value that the diversity of Member Countries planning together provided.

Safe, effective and timely return of sport

4. Emphasising their commitment to the safe, effective and timely return of sport at all levels, Ministers underscored that the health and safety of participants in sporting activities and the wider community must be prioritised and that this would require formulation and communication of methodical, well-planned, and evidence-based approaches to restart sport, in adherence with the guidance of the World Health Organization (WHO) and regional, national and local public health authorities. The importance of establishing mechanisms for collaboration with health and social policy agencies and across levels of government was also emphasised.
5. Commending the leadership of Commonwealth countries who have designed protocols, risk mitigation strategies, planning tools and outreach and awareness measures to support the safe resumption of sport and physical activity, Ministers concurred that future sport policy, competition delivery and programming would need to integrate enhanced prevention measures, hygiene and physical distancing protocols, various event and activity modifications, and contact tracing considerations. Ministers resolved to continue to network, share good practice and key learning on responses to COVID-19 in sport through online means including the [Commonwealth Coronavirus Response Centre](#), and assess the policy implications of modified and innovative approaches adopted to support the delivery of community sport, sport for development and sporting events in response to COVID-19.

Resourcing sport and growing domestic markets

6. Noting the level of economic downturn caused by the pandemic and the scale of the stimulus and support packages made available by governments, Ministers expressed concerns about the sustainability and long term resourcing of sport across the Commonwealth.
7. Highlighting evidence that demonstrates the valuable contribution of the sport sector to GDP, the multiplier effect on direct and indirect employment, and the health, wellbeing and social impact possible from increased participation and well delivered events, Ministers advocated the importance of including investment in the sport sector as part of wider efforts to rebuild and recover. In doing so, they noted with particular concern research

launched by the Commonwealth that modelled if countries did not institute specific policy responses there would be a notable reduction in sport-related GDP in Commonwealth countries.

8. Underscoring the fiscal challenge facing many Commonwealth Governments and the direct impact on sport related GDP, Ministers acknowledged that public-private models, innovative financing solutions and targeted stimulus to grow domestic sport markets across the diversity of the Commonwealth would be required. Ministers concurred that a focus for future Commonwealth cooperation should be on assessing and sharing options and opportunities to mobilise resources and attract innovative financing within the sport sector to enhance accessible infrastructure, implement policies and maximize the contribution of sport to sustainable development.
9. Noting the growth and enhanced emphasis on sport and digitalisation, including eSports and the online delivery of exercise and physical activity programming during the pandemic, Ministers identified the need and potential to grow this dimension of the sport and exercise market across the Commonwealth.

Sport and good governance, human rights and integrity in the new normal

10. Recognising the potential of the pandemic to negatively impact the progress made thus far with regard to promoting gender equality, non-discrimination, enhancing accessibility and inclusion, safeguarding athletes and participants, and protecting the integrity of sport, Ministers reiterated that collective action alongside the Commonwealth Sport Movement to promote good governance, achieve gender equality, prevent and address corruption, protect the integrity of sport, safeguard participants and promote human rights and inclusion in sport was essential to maximise the positive impact of the sector.
11. Ministers welcomed the progress on the *Commonwealth Consensus Statement on Promoting Human Rights in and through Sport*, noted the coherence with the central pillar of the Sustainable Development Goals to ‘leave no-one behind’ and supported the points of consensus on:
 - zero tolerance for violence, harassment, abuse or discrimination, with a particular focus on children and groups in a situation of vulnerability
 - achieving gender equality;
 - advocating for access to sport, physical education and physical activity for all; and,
 - fighting arbitrariness and other abuses in sport.
12. Recognising the need to promote and protect all human rights in sports to intensify the fight against racism, discrimination violence, exploitation, abuse and harassment, Ministers strongly reiterated their condemnation of all forms of racism and discrimination and highlighted the importance of concerted and joined up action by governments, sporting organisations and civil society, in and through sport, to confront this systemic and structural issue. Ministers committed to amplify language condemning all forms of racism and discrimination in the Commonwealth Consensus Statement on Promoting Human Rights in and through Sport and finalise the Consensus Statement through online means following the Forum.

Monitoring and evaluating the response, recovery and long term impact of sport

13. Welcoming the substantial progress made in developing [indicators to measure the contribution of sport to the SDGs](#), Ministers underscored the value that common measurement approaches and model indicators provided in quantifying the value of sport and effectively targeting future investment in the sector. Ministers noted that the sport and SDG indicators could also help inform monitoring and evaluation of the sectorial response to COVID-19 and display the valuable contributions of the sector in responding to the pandemic in supporting individuals and communities.
14. Recognising that the development and endorsement of sport and SDG indicators delivered on a direct request of the 9th Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting (9CSMM), the Kazan Action Plan, and Action Area 4 of the UN Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace, while also aligning with the monitoring and evaluation approach of the Global Action Plan on Physical Activity (GAPPA) and Quality Physical Education Initiative, Ministers commended the convergence and coherence between these key global initiatives and strongly commended the indicators for adoption in 2021 at relevant Commonwealth and United Nations Platforms and use by member countries seeking to enhance the contribution of sport to national development.
15. Ministers thanked Kenya for chairing the meeting, requested the outcomes of the Forum be raised with Commonwealth Heads of Government and committed to meet again for the 10th Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting (10CSMM) in July 2021.