MEGA-EVENTS AND 'BOTTOM-UP' DEVELOPMENT: BEYOND WINDOW DRESSING?

David BLACK and Katelynn NORTHAM
Department of Political Science, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS, Canada

ABSTRACT

Over the past two decades, two parallel trends concerning sport and the 'developing world' accelerated. Firstly, sports mega-events (SMEs) became strategic policy priorities for ambitious 'rising states'. Secondly, the 'Sport for Development and Peace' (SDP) movement grew dramatically, attracting new funding and followers at a rate exceeding the 'development regime' as a whole. These parallel movements highlight two longstanding development logics – a neoliberal emphasis on growth, mega-projects and aggregate benefits that are supposed to 'trickle-down' to poorer people, and a reformist preoccupation with poverty alleviation, equity and inclusion. Critics have long argued that the former logic invariably trumps the latter in SMEs, and that developing societies should shift scarce resources from event hosting to urgent social development needs. Yet, while this emphasis on 'bread not circuses' is compelling, it runs up against the dilemma that resources are mobilised for SMEs in a way that few other imperatives can match. Thus, the question arises: could major games be recast as vehicles for a more frontal effort to tackle poverty, inequality and marginality? By connecting bottom-up and top-down dynamics, more broadly developmental outcomes are possible; but the range and effects of such outcomes are likely to remain limited.

Keywords: *Sports mega-events; Sport for Development and Peace; Global development.*

INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, two parallel trends concerning sport and the 'developing world' accelerated[1]. Firstly, sports mega-events (SMEs) became a strategic policy priority for ambitious 'rising states'. The conception of development that has been privileged in the planning and execution of these events is elite-driven or 'top-down', typically following a predominantly neoliberal logic. Various social or human development initiatives have been undertaken in association with these events, but they have been widely critiqued as superficial sources of legitimation, or window dressing, for the principal beneficiaries – national, international and corporate.

Secondly however, projects, programmes, and organisations associated with the 'Sport for Development and Peace' (SDP) movement grew dramatically, attracting new funding and followers at a rate significantly exceeding the 'development regime' as a whole (Beutler, 2008; Kidd, 2008; Darnell & Black, 2011, Darnell, 2012a). While the organisations and practices associated with this movement are diverse and under-theorised (Coalter, 2010, Donnelly *et al.*,

2011), they have often reflected a more 'bottom-up' or 'grassroots' approach. Broadly then, these parallel movements highlight two distinct and longstanding development logics – a more conservative emphasis on growth, mega-projects and aggregate benefits that are supposed to 'trickle-down' to society as a whole; and a more reformist preoccupation with poverty alleviation, equity and inclusion.

Many critical scholars and activists (Lenskyj, 2008) have long argued that in the context SMEs, the former logic invariably trumps the latter and that society as a whole would be far better served by public policies that reallocated the resources devoted to event hosting to urgent social development priorities. Such arguments are all the more compelling in developing countries marked by stark inequalities and widespread poverty. The opportunity costs of even bidding for SMEs thus raise important ethical dilemmas, as highlighted by the protracted economic and political crisis that accompanied the FIFA 2014 World Cup and the Rio 2016 Olympics in the erstwhile 'rising state' of Brazil (Nolen, 2016).

Yet, while this emphasis on 'bread not circuses' is compelling in principle, it runs up against the dilemma that resources have been mobilised and minds focused for the pursuit of SMEs in a way that no other imperative short of war can easily match. Thus, without the stimulus of such events, it is unlikely that remotely comparable resources and collective energy will be 'unlocked'. Anti-event activists must also reckon with the powerful sense of shared community identity and purpose associated with most SMEs (Chalip, 2006), creating a moment of opportunity for social re-imagining and redirection that can make exceptional projects possible.

Given these considerations, the question arises: could major games be recast as vehicles for a more frontal effort to tackle poverty, inequality and marginality? To answer this question, we begin by briefly discussing the major alternative currents of development thought and the developmental implications of SMEs. We then survey a cross section of mega-event experiences, predominantly in the global South. This is followed by the identification of key distinguishing features of a more truly developmental SME. Finally, we outline some of the conditions that could make this normatively preferable future possible, and the degree to which at least *some* SMEs could move towards greater social equity and inclusiveness. By connecting bottom-up and top-down dynamics, more broadly developmental outcomes are possible, but the range and effects of such outcomes are likely to remain limited.

TOWARDS A REFORMIST SYNTHESIS IN DEVELOPMENT PRAXIS

Virtually all SMEs are portrayed by their advocates as having important developmental legacies (Black & Van der Westhuizen, 2004; Cornelissen, 2009; Darnell, 2012b). The critical question is, what *conception* of development is invoked? This question leads directly to the contested meanings of development.

Elsewhere, Black (2010) has written about the ambiguities of development and their ramifications for 'development-through-sport' (Levermore & Beacom, 2009; Coalter, 2010). These ambiguities include the prevalence of both 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' conceptions of development; its characteristic manifestation (following Joseph Schumpeter) as a form of 'creative destruction', with both progressive and destructive repercussions; and the co-habitation of both oppressive/disciplinary and emancipatory meanings and practices.

In the course of the past generation, we can discern three broad tendencies in development thought and practice (Pieterse, 2010). The dominant tendency for most of this period has been a neoliberal approach privileging 'market forces', private actors, a more limited state and individual rationality and responsibility. Often referred to as 'the (now post-) Washington Consensus', this tendency also shaped the dominant form of globalisation. Development policy has been largely conceived as a process by which governments enable their corporations and citizens to adapt and compete within increasingly unfettered regional and global markets. Individual opportunity has typically trumped concerns with community and social equity.

This neoliberal 'common sense' has been challenged by various reformist alternatives – the offspring of the more Keynesian, structuralist and state-led development policies that dominated the international development landscape until the 1970s, and have garnered renewed interest following the global Financial Crisis that began in late 2007. In the era of neoliberalism, ascendant since the early 1980s, this reformist tendency took a variety of forms, including Alternative Development ideas stressing 'bottom-up', community led and participatory development, and Human Development ideas privileging social equity.

A third powerful current has been the 'post-' or 'anti-development' turn, inspired by post-modern, post-structural and post-colonial ideas. In practice, this current has underpinned various forms of anti-globalisation activism and a search for 'alternatives to' development. It has been far more effective at critique than prescription, but has also stimulated critical reflection in development studies as a whole, and has widened the space for reformist possibilities.

These currents run along a fluid continuum in a state of ongoing conversation and contestation. Neoliberal structural adjustment, for example, attempted to incorporate/appropriate more reformist tendencies through the inclusion of ideas like 'ownership', 'participation' and 'social inclusion' (Cornwall & Brock, 2005; VanWynsberghe *et al.*, 2012). The alternative/human development current has adapted to post-development critiques through a more power-sensitive conceptualisation of 'critical modernism' (Hickney & Mohan, 2004). As the model of neoliberal development has become increasingly embattled, however, not least by ecological critiques. Pieterse (2010:194), among others, has argued that, "the contours of a coherent (reformist) alternative to neoliberalism may gradually be taking shape". This would involve national and transnational initiatives aimed at reducing inequalities, empowering impoverished communities and promoting more participatory decision-making. The recent rise of nationalist, anti-immigrant parties and policies in much of the developed world has not negated this trend – indeed, it has in some ways re-energised it.

Similar tendencies are evident in the world of sport generally, and the politics of SMEs specifically (Cornelissen, 2009; Levermore, 2009). Since the inception of commercialised and

professionalised Olympic sport, beginning with the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, the predominant developmental logic of SMEs has been neoliberal. Indeed, the growing popularity of such events arguably reflected the fact that they have offered a uniquely apt strategic response to the competitive pressures of globalisation (Du Pont, 2011; VanWynberghe *et al*., 2012). At the same time, SME hosts and the international sport organisations (ISOs) that oversee these events (notably soccer's FIFA and the International Olympic Committee – IOC) have played on the 'sport for good' ideological underpinnings of Olympism and sport to promote reformist accommodations. Examples include the incorporation of environmental sustainability as a 'third pillar' of the Olympic movement, and growing support to Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) initiatives (Peacock, 2011). Meanwhile, alternative and grassroots development tendencies have been reflected in the dramatic growth of SDP organisations at both state and non-state levels. Finally, dissenting from but also prodding this dynamic have been anti-Olympic and anti-elite sport organisations and movements.

The question then is, what evidence can we find of a shift towards fuller consideration of equity, participation and poverty-alleviation in SME planning, reflecting the broader development trend identified by Pieterse?

MEGA-EVENTS AND DEVELOPMENT: THE EVIDENCE TO DATE

Table 1 (to follow) lists an array of first- and second-order SMEs that inform the analysis in this paper concerning the developmental aspirations, approaches and legacies of SME hosts. Its purpose is to highlight key analytical themes that have characterised these events. Most (though not all) of the SMEs identified took place in the period of 'high globalisation', following the debt crises and structural adjustment prescriptions of the 1980s and the collapse of the Soviet bloc at the start of the 1990s. Events cited prior to this (the Tokyo Summer Games of 1964 and the Mexican events of 1968 and 1970) are included as key precursors and exemplars for the growing popularity of mega-events in late developing countries. The table also includes several Canadian and European examples that illustrate key tendencies and possibilities in mega-event hosting. The specific events cited include both 'first-order' Olympic Games and FIFA World Cups, and a variety of 'second-order' events (Commonwealth Games, Pan American Games, and Cricket and Rugby World Cups).

Several broad observations can be drawn from these examples. Firstly, certain countries and cities have become habitual mega-event 'users'. The table actually understates this tendency. For example, Japan's long-standing mega-event habit was firmly established well before the Second World War (Low, 1999); Brazil's (and Rio's) history of mega-event hosting includes, among others, the World Cup of 1950 and the Pan American Games in Sao Paolo in 1963, as well as the more recent spate of events (Gaffney, 2010; Curi *et al*., 2011); and Mexico City hosted the 1955 and 1975 Pan Am Games, bookending the first Summer Olympics in the 'developing world', as well as the 1970 World Cup. This clustering tendency can become a

kind of mega-event addiction, with the 'fix' of the next major event obscuring underlying social and developmental challenges.

Secondly, the overall mega-event hosting pattern reflects the gradual transition in global wealth and power from the 'old' West to the rising states of the global South, which have used mega-event hosting as a symbolic marker of their global ambitions and 'arrival'. Whether hosting such events effectively consolidates the rising fortunes of ambitious Southern hosts is, however, far from certain. Mexico's unhappy experience in 1968 (Zolov, 2004), Athens' in 2004, and (provisionally) Brazil's in 2014 and 2016 suggest that fragile rises can be symbolically and practically stalled by mega-event 'overstretch'.

Table 1.   **SELECTED SPORT MEGA-EVENTS IN 'DEVELOPING' COUNTRIES**

Events	Latin America	Asia	Africa	Europe & Canada
1st Order events	- Brazil (World Cup 2014) - Brazil/Rio (Olympics 2016) - Mexico (Olympics 1968) - Mexico (World Cup 1970)	- Japan/Tokyo (Olympics 1964, 2020) - Sapporo (Winter Olympics 1972) - Japan/Nagano (Winter Olympics 1998) - Seoul (Olympics 1988) - China/ Beijing (Olympics 2008) - Japan/Korea (World Cup 2002) - Korea/ Pyeonchang (Winter Olympics 2018) - Qatar (World Cup 2022)	- South Africa (World Cup 2010) - South Africa/Cape Town (failed Olympic bid 2004)	- Athens (Olympics 2004) - Vancouver (Winter Olympics 2010) - Toronto (failed Olympic bids 1996 & 2008) - Russia/Sochi (Winter Olympics 2014) - Russia (World Cup 2018)
2nd Order events	- Brazil/Rio (Pan Am Games 2007) - Cuba/Havana (Pan Am Games 1991) - Dominican Republic/ Santo Domingo (Pan Am Games 2003) - Mexico City (Pan Am Games 1975) - Mexico/Guada-lajara (Pan Am Games 2011) - West Indies (Cricket World Cup 2007)	- Malaysia/ Kuala Lumpur (Commonwealth Games 1998) - India/Delhi (Commonwealth Games 2010)	- South Africa (Rugby World Cup 1995) - South Africa (Cricket World Cup 2003)	- Canada/ Toronto (Pan Am Games 2015)

Thirdly, while there are some striking similarities in the aspirations of mega-event hosts across disparate regions and development categories, there is also a need for more fine-grained comparative analyses of the developmental approaches associated with different types of events and hosts in different regional contexts. These reflect distinct development patterns associated with regional forms of capitalism and demonstration effects. For example, a succession of Asian late-developers have adopted an approach to mega-event hosting that not only emulated the example set by Japan (and later South Korea), but reflected the distinctive features associated with Asian 'developmental states': intense economic nationalism; a high level of state intervention and leadership of the economy, with large-scale public expenditures on strategic initiatives; and aggressive pursuit of a 'hybridised' conception of modernity, combining Western and indigenous ideas and practices (Black & Peacock, 2011). The Latin American cases, by comparison, have shifted over time from the populist patterns of industrial modernism associated with the Import Substitution era in the first several post-World War II decades (Zolov, 2004; Gaffney, 2010), to the externally oriented and socially differentiated pattern of the post-debt crisis ('high globalisation') period in which disparities are not only tolerated but reinforced.

With regard to first- *versus* second-order events (as well as multi-sport, single-centred *versus* single-sport, multi-centred events) there is, firstly, a need to carefully evaluate the suitability of certain types of events for prospective hosts, in terms of existing infrastructure, the popular base and social meaning of different sporting codes, the sequencing of event-centred strategies, etc. (Black, 2008; Cornelissen, 2009). Certain types of events are likely to generate more reliable benefits, and involve fewer risks, for some hosts than others. More broadly, with regard to maximising the social/human development benefits of mega-events, there are particular kinds of dangers and distortions associated with the high stakes of first-order events, where fear of failure – particularly for developing country hosts – can trump virtually all more routine development priorities and produce major distortions in public spending (Gaffney, 2010; Zimbalist, 2010; Cornelissen, 2011).

On the other hand, that same heightened degree of visibility and scrutiny can combine with the 'sport for good' ideological associations of first-order events to produce powerful incentives for social development initiatives. This dynamic was clearly present in South Africa's 2004 Olympic bid and its 2010 World Cup (Hiller, 2000; Swart & Bob, 2004; Cornelissen, 2011), as well as Toronto's and Vancouver's Olympic adventures (Kidd, 1992; VanWynsberghe *et al.*, 2012). Conversely, the lower visibility and public/media scrutiny of second-order events can make it easier for public officials and bid committees to abandon social development plans and engage in corrupt practices, while orchestrating venues and infrastructure oriented towards local and international elites. This dynamic is illustrated by the 2007 and 2011 Pan Am Games in Rio and Guadalajara, and the 1998 and 2010 Commonwealth Games in Malaysia and India respectively (Van der Westhuizen, 2004; Gaffney, 2010; Doolittle, 2011; Du Pont, 2011).

Finally, it is apparent from the cases reviewed that, as noted in the introduction, the dominant developmental logic of SMEs has always been 'top-down', reflecting the aspirations and interests of political and economic elites and 'booster coalitions'. Nevertheless, the specific nature of this elitist development logic has been malleable, reflecting different conceptions of development in different times and places. Thus, the predominantly neoliberal logic of most events in the last generation is a departure from the more statist and populist logic of earlier Latin American events (Zolov, 2004; Gaffney, 2010), and has always been modified in the case of east Asian hosts by their more state-led developmental approaches. Moreover, there has been growing pressure to incorporate broadly based social development objectives, programmes and projects in the hosting plans for mega-events – echoing the growing popularity of the SDP movement (Kidd, 2008; Coalter, 2010; Carey *et al*., 2011).

The impact of this latter trend should not be discounted. To date, however, it has been distinctly limited, in three senses. Firstly, where it has been most systematic and sustained, notably in the cases of Toronto's bids for the 1996 and 2008 Olympics and in Cape Town's bid for the 2004 Games, the bids have been unsuccessful. Secondly, where developmental dimensions have been most prominent, notably in South Africa's 2010 World Cup, the SDP initiatives associated with the event were initiated comparatively late in the preparatory process and received a small fraction of the public expenditures (Cornelissen, 2011). Thirdly, the civil society advocacy and relatively open, accountable governance structures that have underpinned a stronger social development focus are most robust in more developed countries, like Canada and the United Kingdom, or a country with a long history of democratic struggle, like South Africa. This takes us back to our core question: to what extent, and in what ways, could 'bottom-up' development initiatives, explicitly concerned with poverty alleviation and social equity, become a higher priority in mega-event planning?

TOWARDS MORE TRULY DEVELOPMENTAL MEGA-EVENTS?

SMEs, no matter how well conceived, should not be oversold as vehicles for advancing human development objectives. There are structural obstacles to a more comprehensive developmental approach, rooted in their elite orientation and the powerful corporate, political and organisational interests that surround them. As a result, there will always be a danger of unrealistic expectations about what they can achieve in the face of pervasive human need (Hiller, 2000). Similarly, we need to assess their developmental ramifications over a much longer time frame than has typically occurred (Cornelissen *et al*., 2011; Swart *et al*., 2011). Nevertheless, past experiences, combined with the accumulated understanding of developmental interventions in other contexts, provide some crucial markers of what a more inclusive developmental mega-event could look like.

A foundational commitment

A focus on the social/human development benefits of event hosting, specifically for historically marginalised communities, and on the distributional effects of such events (how their costs and benefits are distributed among different social groups) would need to be built into bid processes from the outset – ideally as a prerequisite for candidate cities. This is a long-standing idea. Kidd (1992), for example, argued in light of Toronto's experience in bidding for the 1996 Summer Games that the IOC should require each candidate city to conduct a social impact assessment

and a public consultation before submitting Olympic bids. Hosts, particularly in developed countries like Canada and the UK, have increasingly undertaken wide ranging consultations with representative groups and tracked a lengthy list of indicators of Games impacts over an extended time period (OGI-UBC Research Team, 2011). The IOC's (2014) *Agenda 2020* launched as a response to the growing reputational challenges facing the Olympic movement, gestures in this direction under the elusive rubrics of sustainability and legacy.

There is, therefore, some movement upon which to build. Yet these experiences are relatively recent and far from habituated. Traditionally, mega-event hosts have not incorporated social impact concerns into the bidding process (Minnaert, 2012). While London 2012 did have some developmental aspirations, reflected in the siting of much of the Games infrastructure in the poorer east end, the long-term outcomes of this effort are controversial (London, 2012). Rio's inclusive developmental aspirations were largely sacrificed as the core imperatives of preparing the main venues in the midst of a protracted political-economic crisis took priority (Nolen, 2016). Thus, a Games planning process that privileged distributional effects and poverty alleviation would be a sharp departure. The political foundations and incentives for a more explicitly pro-poor approach would therefore require careful attention.

Community consultation

Closely related to a foundational commitment to social equity and broadly-based development would be the need for early, systematic and sustained community consultations. Again, there are examples upon which to build. It is difficult, however, to structure and sustain meaningful consultations with such communities. Development practice is replete with examples of 'participatory' processes that have been co-opted to gain legitimacy and acquiescence for the development preferences of the powerful (Cornwall & Brock, 2005). How, then, to establish ongoing consultations that strengthen rather than distort democratic input, without compromising the urgent tasks of event preparation?

There are no easy formulas for addressing this challenge, especially in countries where traditions of democratic participation are limited. If consultations are to be taken seriously and to yield real results, they must occur in the earliest stages of the bid, not after major decisions have already been made. Arnstein (1969) identifies the latter type of participation as essentially manipulative – an attempt by governments or elites to 'sell' decisions after the fact. The key point is that a developmental mega-event would aim to systematically expand consultation with, and participation by, historically marginalised communities at all stages of the process.

Transparent and accountable governance structures and processes

Cornelissen *et al*. (2011:315) argue that, "Among the strongest predictive factors for how a host could be affected in the future are the governance relationships that exist in the host country or city, and the management structures that are set up to stage an event". The problem, of course, is that mega-event organisers cannot easily foster robust and accountable governance practices where they do not already exist. Nor are they inclined towards routine exposure to

public scrutiny. Quite the reverse: Games organising committees have typically taken forms that are, by design, at least partially shielded from processes of public accountability (Wisniewska, 2008). The objective, under the circumstances, should be to ensure that organising committees are broadly representative, particularly of communities that a 'developmental games' is aiming to prioritise; that they are regularly answerable to elected representatives; and that there are robust reporting requirements on plans, preparations and expenditures.

The prospects for robust accountability are a function not only of the formal governance structures in the host country/city, but of the wider social context within which both government and the organising committee are embedded. This includes dynamic and capable civil society organisations, of the sort that compelled Toronto to adopt the 'Toronto Olympic Commitment' in a previous era (Kidd, 1992), and a strong and independent mass media, not already embedded within a pro-event booster coalition, that can hold organisers and overseers to account.

There is also a key role in this process for researchers. Many scholars and researchers (in both development and sport studies) have a strong normative commitment to social equity, and can help both civil society groups and event organisers imagine what a more developmental and inclusive event can look like. Initiatives like the Sport Legacies Research Collaborative at the University of Toronto *(*https://kpe.utoronto.ca/research-centre/sport-legacies-research-collaborative*)* could be critical agents of accountability. A developmental Games would be responsive to research networks aimed at enabling social development possibilities.

Design

This is a very broad marker encompassing venues (both competition and training), transportation and communication infrastructure, housing for athletes, officials and media, the enhancement of public spaces, etc. Developmental design should also be closely aligned with environmental sustainability (the 'third pillar' of Olympism).

Hiller's (2000) discussion of the plan for Cape Town's 2004 Games bid provides some excellent starting points. Firstly, venues would need to be designed to improve access, opportunities, community services and attractive public spaces for marginalised communities. One can imagine design principles that link venue development to strategically located health, education, housing and other recreational facilities, for example. An area where Hiller (2000) noted a serious risk of misplaced expectations was the critical challenge of decent and affordable housing. In Cape Town, for example, even if all housing created for the event was relatively 'affordable', the resulting housing stock would not have made much of a dent in the acute shelter needs of Capetonians [2]. Nevertheless, these events can be used as opportunities for innovative thinking about housing designs that could be replicated to have a larger impact on shortages and requirements.

With regard to event and training venues, a design brief seeking to ensure that venues are accessible to community participants after the event, and/or that they are sufficiently modest and affordable to attract a wide range of tenants and 'pay their way', is critical. Alternatively, venues could be designed with an eye to how they might be feasibly and affordably modified

to meet other community needs (Zimbalist, 2010). The long history of mega-event 'white elephants' should be avoidable with careful planning. More recent events, such as the London Games, offer some signs of progress (Renzetti, 2011). This would be accompanied by plans for community recreation and sport programmes that would seek to ensure the venues were well and widely used. The general point is that a developmental mega-event would require a design brief that privileges accessibility, affordability and sustainability, particularly for disadvantaged communities.

Employment

Hiller (2000) notes that the Cape Town Olympic bid enjoyed higher levels of support from black than white South Africans, in part because of their acute need for, and expectation of, new employment opportunities. This is another area in which anticipated benefits are often substantially oversold. Nevertheless, there *are* new employment opportunities that are inevitably associated with mega-event preparations, construction and hosting. To ensure that these benefits reached the widest possible range of citizens, and skills training and transferable skills are maximised (an explicit aspiration of the Cape Town organisers), event planning would have to be coordinated with educational and training institutions and programmes, as well as potential employers motivated by incentives of Corporate Social Responsibility. This, in turn, presumes capable and responsive policy-making capacity, and the ability of training and educational institutions to respond to the resulting needs and opportunities. Again, these are capacities that cannot be created quickly if they are not already in place – but mega-events can create powerful (if temporary) incentives for institutional reform. The needed capacities may be developed too slowly to seize pre-event possibilities, but could lead to programme innovations and capacity enhancement that linger as key legacies.

Narratives

Sport has traditionally been portrayed as having the capacity to ameliorate economic, social, and geopolitical fissures between peoples and nations. SMEs in particular are often held up as opportunities to foster international and intercultural understanding. Hartmann and Kwauk (2011:286-287) deconstruct this common narrative of sport and development, arguing that sport is often used as a tool to "maintain and reproduce established social relations". The neoliberal underpinnings of the international sporting community emphasise hierarchy, expertise, competition, and the idea that improvement can be achieved by simply trying harder. This emphasis masks underlying structures of inequality. Thus, dominant narratives of sport and development are fundamentally reproductive rather than emancipating.

If this is the case, broadly speaking, for the SDP movement, Hartmann and Kwauk (2011) argue that we need to focus more on empowerment. What role can SMEs play in this process? Hegemonic narratives need not be taken for granted; SMEs could articulate and 'sell' a different story. What if host cities were to privilege their commitment to goals other than economic growth, national pride and the promotion of athleticism – for example, community development, gender equality and LGBTQ inclusion? Such efforts could give the story of these

events a previously neglected angle and might enable mega-event organisers to attract a more diverse range of community partners and supporters.

Events, such as the Olympics, offer exceptional opportunities for governments, NGOs, and activists to open up global conversations about human rights, poverty and inequality. While hosts are unlikely to want to highlight such issues, they provide an extraordinary window of opportunity for NGOs to appeal to both their own governments and international audiences – raising awareness, funds and the potential for political recognition and change within both governmental and sporting organisations.

Youth development

SMEs are inherently youth-centric. Not only are youth the primary competitors, but they are also the generation that stands to benefit and/or suffer most from event repercussions. The legacy of any such event is, in effect, their legacy. In the context of the global South, youth constitute the largest and most 'at risk' demographic. Therefore, youth representation needs to be incorporated throughout the bidding process, the event itself and the process of post-event legacy making. Yet the experience of youth in past SMEs has been mixed at best. Marginalised youth have tended to be negatively impacted, particularly as a result of attempts to 'clean up' cities in preparation for tourists and television cameras. Youth in both 'developed' and 'underdeveloped' cities have experienced forced removal by security forces in tandem with mega-events (Van Blerk, 2011). A developmental Games would incorporate youth into the development of the bid; the design of spaces, legacy projects and programmes; as volunteers and workers during the event; and as post-event inheritors of their consequences.

POLITICS OF PROMOTING DEVELOPMENTAL GAMES

Reflecting on these possibilities is both promising and sobering. Promising, because there has been significant movement in the past two decades, from the time when Hiller (2000:442) argued that "the Cape Town bid [with its developmental focus] provided an entirely new variation of the rationale for utilising a mega-event for urban development". Sobering, because mega-events with an explicitly human/social development rationale remain exceptional, because even where considerations of 'inclusion' and 'empowerment' are explicitly pursued, they have been relatively marginal and filtered through a de-politicising neoliberal prism (VanWynsberghe *et al.*, 2012) and because they have been most advanced in wealthy, developed liberal capitalist settings, like Vancouver and London.

This leads, finally, to the question of the political foundations upon which a more systematic and sustained emphasis on 'bottom-up' development could be built into SMEs. Advances will depend on the interplay of political dynamics at multiple levels: 'bottom-up' progress will involve permissive and active conditions from elite and mid-level actors, as well as bottom-up pressures (Death, 2011).

Given the hierarchical nature of sport governance, ISOs will be important in enabling and/or inhibiting a stronger developmental focus – none more so than the IOC. This is because of its unique self-conception as the keeper of the ideology of Olympism, with its foundational commitment to the idea of 'sport for good' and its pivotal role in shaping the norms and

practices of other ISOs. Byron Peacock has highlighted the way the IOC has adapted its sense of 'social mission or purpose' by absorbing and adapting the dominant normative ideas of successive historical periods. Of particular relevance is the degree to which, in the same period that developing countries became increasingly prominent as SME hosts, the IOC embraced SDP as its principle conception of sport for good, including the rhetoric and form of 'grassroots', 'participatory', or 'empowering' development' (Peacock, 2011). It has used its increasing wealth to forge partnerships with governmental, non-governmental and corporate partners to do so, and supports a plethora of development and humanitarian initiatives that aim to support community-based efforts to tackle social ills (Peacock, 2011).

Given the embedding of this bottom-up development conception of sport for good in the IOC's sense of social mission (however shallow and self-serving it may seem in practice), as well as growing global concern with social inequality highlighted by the world financial crisis, the IOC *should be* sensitive to charges that its foundational event, the Games themselves, are indifferent or even detrimental to the social needs of marginalised communities. It *should be* a relatively small step to embracing a more actively developmental approach to Games preparations. Moreover, the rationale for doing so has been firmly reinforced by the crisis in which the Olympic movement is now enmeshed, as the number of cities and countries willing to host declines sharply in both the global North and South (McAloon, 2016). An IOC commitment to more inclusive and developmental Games would be an important enabling condition for those who seek to push the world's paramount mega-event in this direction.

In practice, however, the IOC and other ISO's have multiple purposes and interests – above all, successful, popular and media-friendly Games. It is doubtful, given their diverse motivations, identities and constituencies that the IOC would *choose to* consistently pursue more socially inclusive, developmental SMEs without sustained pressure to do so. The sources of this pressure would need to be multiple.

For instance, 'bottom-up' development objectives must also be prioritised by key elements within host governments – national, regional and local. It is instructive, in this regard, to revisit Cape Town's 'developmental' bid for the 2004 Games. Crucially, the bid emerged in the immediate aftermath of the end of *apartheid*, when all elite sectors accepted the need for redress of the racial injustices of the past. Under the circumstances, it was virtually unimaginable that a Games bid could be mounted *without* a focus on improving the life chances of historically disadvantaged South Africans and restructuring the '*apartheid* city'. To what extent can similar public sector imperatives be generated in other contexts? In Brazil, where comparable social needs and inequalities were present and where a relatively progressive Worker's Party government led the charge for the Games, the incentives for a more developmentally inclusive SME were outweighed by top-down coalitions of public and private interests and by high levels of elite corruption, particularly in the sporting establishment (*Economist*, 2011). How much more improbable are commitments to inclusivity within the public institutions of, for example, Russia, China, or Qatar?

This highlights the importance of a mobilised 'developmental coalition' in host societies. Such a coalition would stand in contrast (though not always in opposition) to the inevitable booster coalitions that mega-events generate. It would include capable and media-savvy civil society organisations and activists, along with socially engaged planners, architects, researchers and politicians. An early exemplar was the coalition that orchestrated the Toronto Olympic Commitment in the late 1980s, motivated by a keen sense of "the politics of the possible" and the "more humane Olympic [and sporting] tradition which was brought into the debate by progressive athletes and sports leaders" (Kidd, 1992: 160). It would relate uneasily to hard-line anti-event activists, finding areas of common ground on social critiques and objectives, but diverging on strategies and tactics. It would depend, however, on the pressure brought to bear by mega-event critics for the impetus to advance its own reform agenda.

The presence of, and space for, such a developmental coalition in prospective SME hosts will vary considerably. Typically, to reiterate a paradox noted above, their capabilities will be stronger in richer societies with less acute development challenges. Recall, however, that many rising Southern states (and prospective event hosts) have robust and sophisticated traditions of social activism. Moreover, in the context of a growing SDP 'movement', experiences and capacities can and should be shared transnationally. SDP activists and developmental coalitions can learn from Transnational Advocacy Networks that have fostered social change in issue areas ranging from human rights to the environment (Keck & Sikkink, 1998).

Finally, there is a critical role for more genuinely grassroots, bottom-up initiatives. This brings us back to the characteristic 'liminality' associated with mega-events (Chalip, 2006), and the atmosphere of celebration and possibility they generate. In these contexts, community-based organisations may be inspired to launch event-themed initiatives that can have important development benefits. Swart *et al.* (2011) highlight an interesting example associated with the FIFA World Cup in South Africa, where the Football Foundation of South Africa (FFSA) was established in 2008 in the racially divided, non-host community of Gansbaai. The Foundation responded to the stimulus of the looming event, and the paucity of community recreation facilities, by initiating plans for a new multipurpose recreation facility and linking the resulting opportunities to social development programming in education and health. The community was able to exploit the conjuncture of the World Cup to partner with corporate and governmental agencies to finance the facility. "Increasing popular pressure on international sport federations and their commercial partners to demonstrate greater levels of accountability has obliged them to take the issue of the broader developmental significance of their events more seriously" (Swart *et al.*, 2011:420).

This case illustrates the catalytic possibilities of mega-events in linking bottom-up initiatives to top-down interests and resources, through governmental, nongovernmental, and corporate supports. It underscores the basic point that social/human development advances in SME hosts, while depending strongly on local initiative and participation, can achieve much more (in both scale and speed) by connecting with top-down agents and resources. It is also essential to establish policies and programmes that will extend well beyond the event itself, and to track their long-term impacts. Moreover, as promising as cases like the FFSA are, they need to be supplemented by larger scale comparative analyses before we can begin to reach firmer conclusions regarding the developmental potential of national hosting experiences.

CONCLUSION

The developmental initiatives that have been stimulated by at least some mega-events should be understood as a kind of progress. Window dressing is, after all, an attractive *accoutrement* to any structure. But where they have gained a foothold, these initiatives typically fall well short of a sustained engagement with entrenched structures of poverty and inequity.

Not long ago, it seemed that despite the costs and risks, a succession of rising states were committed to pursuing SMEs in the confident hope of achieving a range of economic and political objectives. To justify doing so, they needed to be able to argue that these events would also generate broadly based developmental benefits, whether or not these benefits were actually achieved. A series of SMEs has now cast serious doubt on the strategic advantages of these events for developing country hosts. Competitions like the Delhi Commonwealth Games (2010), the Guadalajara Pan Am Games (2011), the 2014 FIFA World Cup and 2016 Rio Games have clouded the future of global South SME hosting, and thus jeopardised the prospects for a more truly universal Olympic movement, with viable hosts from every region and continent. In this context of uncertainty, it is all the more crucial to re-consider the developmental possibilities of such events.

We are beginning to understand the sorts of considerations that could lead to more broadly based developmental benefits from SMEs, bearing in mind the need for clear-eyed appraisals of these possibilities and the avoidance of hyperbolic expectations. We also understand some of the political dynamics and strategic calculations that could advance the prospects for more developmental mega-events. Given the powerful countervailing forces that continue to pervade mega-event preparation and implementation, the question remains how far these possibilities can be realised. The future of SMEs in general, and the Olympic movement in particular, rests at least partly on how this question is answered.

End notes

[1] This article is derived and updated from: BLACK, David & NORTHAM, Katelynn (2015). Mega-events and 'bottom-up' development: Beyond window dressing. In G. Anderson and C.J. Kukucha (Eds.), *International political economy* (Part 6: Chapter 23). Don Mills: Oxford University Press, Canada.

[2] Similarly, the promise of an affordable housing legacy from the Vancouver winter Games proved almost wholly illusory (Pentifallo & VanWynsberghe, 2015). Remarkably, the Rio Olympic Village was unapologetically designed for conversion to high-end condominiums, oblivious to the housing needs of millions of poor residents.

REFERENCES

ARNSTEIN, S. (1969). A ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners,* 35(4): 216-224.

BEUTLER, I. (2008). Sport serving development and peace: Achieving the goals of the United Nations through sport. *Sport in Society,* 11(4): 359-69.

BLACK, D. (2008). Dreaming big: The pursuit of 'second order' games as a strategic response to globalization. *Sport in Society,* 11(4): 467-480.

BLACK, D. (2010). The ambiguities of development: Implications for 'Development through Sport'. *Sport in Society,* 13(1): 121-129.

BLACK, D. & PEACOCK, B. (2011). Catching up: Understanding the pursuit of major games by rising developmental states. *The International Journal of the History of Sport,* 28(16): 2270-2287.

BLACK, D. & VAN DER WESTHUIZEN, J. (2004). The allure of global games for 'semi-peripheral' polities and spaces: A research agenda'. *Third World Quarterly,* 25(7): 1195-1214.

CAREY, M.; MASON, D. & MISENER, L. (2011). Social responsibility and the competitive bid process for major sport events. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues,* 35(3): 246-263.

CHALIP, L. (2006) . Towards social leverage of sport events. *Journal of Sport and Tourism,* 11(2): 109-127.

COALTER, F. (2010). The politics of sport-for-development: limited focus programmes and broad gauge problems? *International Review for the Sociology of Sport,* 45(3): 295-314.

CORNELISSEN, S. (2009). A delicate balance: Major sport events and development. In: R. Levermore & A. Beacom (Eds.), *Sport and international development* (pp. 76-97). London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

CORNELISSEN, S. (2011). More than a sporting chance? Appraising the sport for development legacy of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. *Third World Quarterly,* 32(3): 503-529.

CORNELISSEN, S.; BOB, U. & SWART, K. (2011). Towards redefining the concept of legacy in relation to sport mega-events: Insights from the 2010 World Cup. *Development Southern Africa,* 28(3): 307-18.

CORNWALL, A. & BROCK, K. (2005). What do buzzwords do for development policy: A critical look at 'participation', 'empowerment', and 'poverty reduction'. *Third World Quarterly,* 26(7): 1043-1060.

CURI, M.; KNIJNIK, J. & MASCARENHAS, G. (2011). The Pan American Games in Rio de Janeiro 2007: Consequences of a mega-event on a BRIC country. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport,* 46(2): 140-156.

DARNELL, S. (2012a). Sport for development and peace: A critical sociology. London, UK: Bloomsbury Academic.

DARNELL, S. (2012b). Olympism in action, Olympic hosting and the politics of 'Sport for Development and Peace': Investigating the development discourses of Rio 2016. *Sport in Society,* 6(15): 869-887.

DARNELL, S. & BLACK, D. (2011). Mainstreaming sport into international development studies. *Third World Quarterly,* 3(32): 367-378.

DEATH, C. (2011). 'Greening' the 2010 FIFA World Cup: Environmental sustainability and the mega-event in South Africa. *Journal of Environmental Policy and Planning,* 13(2): 99-117.

DONNELLY, P.; ATKINSON, M.; BOYLE, S. & SZTO, C. (2011). Sport for Development and Peace: A public sociology perspective. *Third World Quarterly,* 32(3): 589-601.

DOOLITTLE, R. (2011). Learning from Guadalajara's mistakes. *The Star (Toronto)*, 14 October.

DU PONT, V.D.N. (2011). The dream of Delhi as a global city. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research,* 35(3): 533-554.

ECONOMIST (2011). Own goals from Senhor Futebol. *Economist*, 1 October.

GAFFNEY, C. (2010). Mega-events and socio-spatial dynamics in Rio de Janeiro, 1919-2016. *Journal of Latin American Geography,* 9(1): 7-29.

HARTMANN, D. & KWAUK, C. (2011). Sport and development: An overview, critique and reconstruction. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues,* 35(3): 284-305.

HICKNEY, S. & MOHAN, G. (2004). *Participation: From tyranny to transformation.* London, UK: Zed Books.

HILLER, H. (2000). Mega-events, urban boosterism and growth strategies: An analysis of the objectives and legitimations of the Cape Town 2004 Olympic Bid. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research,* 24(2): 439-458.

IOC (International Olympic Committee) (2014). *Olympic Agenda 2020.* Hyperlink: [https://www.olympic.org/olympic-agenda-2020]. Retrieved on 5 June 2017.

KECK, M. & SIKKINK, K. (1998). *Activists beyond borders.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

KIDD, B. (1992). The Toronto Olympic Commitment: Towards a social contract for the Olympic Games. *Olympika: International Journal of Olympic Studies*, 1: 154-167.

KIDD, B. (2008). A new social movement: Sport for development and peace. *Sport in Society,* 4(11): 370-380.

LENSKYJ, H. (2008). *Olympic Industry Resistance.* Albany, New York: State University of New York Press.

LEVERMORE, R. (2009). Sport-in-International Development: Theoretical frameworks. In R. Levermore & A. Beacom (Eds.), *Sport and international development* (pp. 26-54). London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

LEVERMORE, R. & BEACOM, A. (Eds.) (2009). *Sport and international development.* London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

LONDON 2012 OLYMPIC GAMES (2012). *About us.* Hyperlink: [http://www.london2012.com/about-us]. Retrieved on 19 January 2017.

LOW, M. (1999). Japan, modernity and the Tokyo Olympics. *Humanities Research,* 14(2): 33-52.

MCALOON, J. (2016). Agenda 2020 and the Olympic Movement. *Sport in Society,* 19(6): 767-785.

MINNAERT, L. (2012). An Olympic legacy for all? The non-infrastructural outcomes of the Olympic Games for socially excluded groups (Atlanta 1996–Beijing 2008). *Tourism Management,* 33(2): 361-370.

NOLEN , S. (2016). Rio, the Olympics, and Broken Promises. *Hakai Magazine, Coastal Science and Societies*, 19 July.

OGI-UBC RESEARCH TEAM (2011). Olympic Games Impact (OGI) Study for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games – Games-time Report. Vancouver, Canada: OGI-UBC.

PEACOCK, B. (2011). A secret instinct of social preservation: Legitimacy and the dynamic (re)constitution of Olympic conceptions of the 'good'. *Third World Quarterly,* 32(3): 477-502.

PENTIFALLO, C. & VANWYNSBERGHE, R. (2015). Mega-event impact assessment and policy attribution: embedded case study, social housing, and the 2010 Winter Olympic Games. *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*, 7(3): 266-281.

PIETERSE, J. (2010). *Development theory: Deconstructions/Reconstructions* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

RENZETTI, E. (2011). The Lego Olympics. *The Globe and Mail (Toronto)*, 24 September.

SWART, K. & BOB, U. (2004). The seductive discourse of development: The Cape Town 2004 Olympic bid. *Third World Quarterly,* 25(7): 1311-1324.

SWART, K.; KNOTT, B. & SALIE, M. (2011). A sport and sociocultural legacy beyond 2010: A case study of the Football Foundation of South Africa. *Development Southern Africa,* 28(3): 415-427.

VAN BLERK, L. (2011). Managing Cape Town's street children/youth: The impact of the 2010 World Cup bid on street life in the City of Cape Town. *South African Geographical Journal,* 93(1): 29-37.

VAN DER WESTHUIZEN, J. (2004). Marketing Malaysia as a model modern Muslim State: The significance of the 16th Commonwealth Games. *Third World Quarterly,* 25(7): 1277-1291.

VANWYNSBERGHE, R.; SURBOG, B. & WYLY, E. (2012). Neoliberalism, social inclusion, and mega-events: The case of 2010. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research,* 37(6): 2074-2093.

WISNIEWSKA, I. (2008). State corporations: State property in de facto private hands. *Baltic Rim Economies,* 29(2): 23-24.

ZIMBALIST, A. (2010). Is it worth it? *Finance and Development*, 47(1): 8-11.

ZOLOV, E. (2004). Showcasing the 'land of tomorrow': Mexico and the 1968 Olympics. *The Americas,* 61(2): 159-188.

Corresponding author*: David Black;* ***E-mail****:blackd@dal.ca*