



Sports: On the Right Track

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Abstract

This paper is written on the premise that Kenyan youth participation in sports and recreation is not well documented. The paper therefore tracks sports in Kenya from pre-colonial, colonial and post colonial periods with a particular emphasis on All Africa Games, Common Wealth Games and the Olympic Games. It highlights personal and external factors that have influenced youth participation in sports and recreation in Kenya. The various policies for youth sports in Kenya are weighted against other policies in Nigeria, England and USA to demonstrate mechanisms instituted elsewhere that makes youth participation in sports more efficient. The emerging trends of youth in sports and recreation in Kenya are highlighted and various fundamental issues are raised with a view to strengthen youth participation in sports and recreation in Kenya.

Contextualizing Sports in and Recreation in Kenya

Sports⁸⁶ and recreation⁸⁷ activities can contribute immensely towards the enhancement of the growth, development, health and general quality of life of the youth. In theory and practice, these activities include both indoor and outdoor activities, as well as physically active and passive pursuits that are meaningful and enjoyable to the participant (Torkildsen, 1992). The main distinguishing factor between these forms of activities and others in which people may participate for enjoyment is that they must be morally and socially acceptable and contribute to the wellbeing of the participants (Cordes & Ibrahim, 1999). The development, organization and coordination of youth sports and recreation activities and programmes should therefore be done in a way that ensures that they uphold societal values, and contribute to their wellbeing.

If logically coordinated and conducted, the whole array of sports and recreation activities is beneficial to participants. The benefits are broadly categorized as psychological, physical and social (Beashel & Taylor, 1992; Payne & Hahn, 2000). Some of the physical benefits include enhancement of physical fitness and health, while the psychological benefits include management of stress, escape from personal pressure, having rest, building self-confidence and self-image and sublimation. Development of friendships, interaction and bonding with others, learning of sportsmanship and socially acceptable behaviour constitute some of the social benefits of the activities (Cordes & Ibrahim, 1999). It is due to these benefits that sports and recreation translate into large economic industries involving many people of all age categories.

As much as the benefits of participation in sports and recreation are well documented (Beashel & Taylor, 1992; Cordes & Abraham, 1999 Payne & Hahn, 2000), Kenya's youth participation in sports and recreation is not. Although participation in sports is thought to ensure that the youth expend their surplus energies in socially accepted activities, documented evidence does indicate that many young people are involved in contraindicative practices such as drug use and substance abuse, organized gangs and are a vulnerable group in terms of teenage pregnancies, early marriages, HIV and AIDS among other vices (Gitonga, 1998; Republic of Kenya, 2005). They were also adversely involved as main actors in the Post-Election Violence (PEV) of 2007/8.

Conceptual Framework

The issues revolving around youth and their participation in sports and recreation in Kenya will be conceptualized under the factors which influence performance in any type of sporting endeavours, and with specific reference to the Kenyan situation as shown in the figure 66 below.

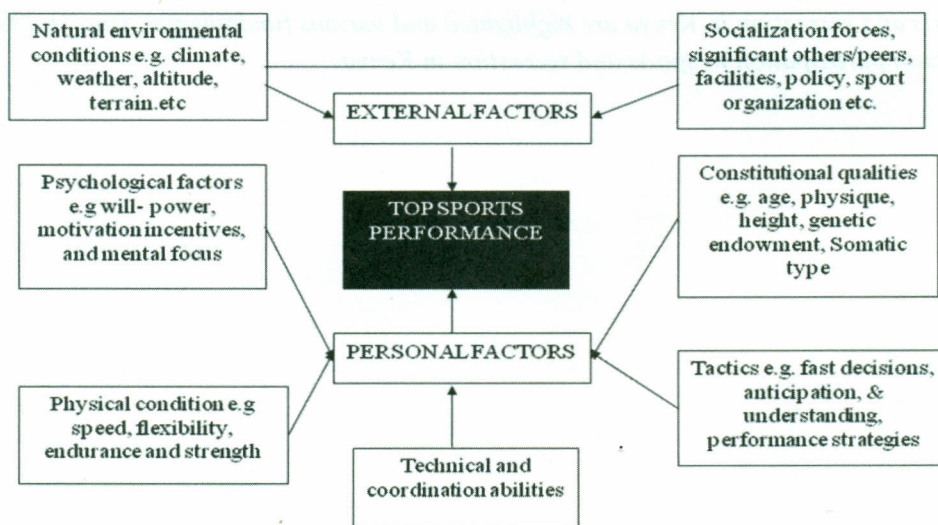


Figure 66: Factors Influencing Performance in Sports in Kenya

Source: Njororai, 2003.

⁸⁶ Any activity involving physical exertion and skill that is governed by a set of rules or customs and often undertaken competitively

⁸⁷ Socially accepted activities engaged in during free time for enjoyment, amusement, relaxation and health. These may include sports, games, exercises, among others (Beasel and Taylor, 1992)

External factors

External factors are associated with conditions such as climate, weather conditions and altitude. This could partially explain the reason for the establishment of numerous training camps for long distance running in the Rift Valley province which has many areas of high altitude. Other external factors include socialization agents such as family, learning institutions, availability of teachers/coaches, peer group influence and general community influence with regard to participation in sport and recreational activities (Njororai, 2003).

It is important to note that sociological factors have seen talent identification and nurturing being dichotomized along different ethnic groups and regions. For instance, in Kenya, the Rift Valley region is associated more with athletics, while Western and Luo Nyanza are identified with football. However, some sports such as volleyball, basketball and rugby have athletes coming from different parts of the country possibly due to the influence of educational institutions and more aptly the secondary schools where competition in sports is deeply entrenched and cherished (Wamukoya, 1994).

Schools are credited with the provision of facilities, equipment and teachers or coaches who ensure that pupils continue participating in sports activities. However, the schools determine the kinds of sports activities given preferential treatment (Gitonga, 1998). It is notable that secondary schools have been used as a medium to introduce new disciplines through their sports competitions. However, some sports disciplines have tended to be dominant in certain schools. Former European schools appear to put a lot of emphasis on the modern games that they introduced in the country such as rugby, tennis and cricket while Asian schools tend to put emphasis on hockey and cricket.

Other external factors include political influence through sports policies, sports clubs and sports organizations as well as general management and administration of sports in the country. For instance, the perennial wrangles in various sports organizations which are supposed to be dealt with through administrative mechanisms and within specific policy frameworks have adverse implications on the development of sports in the country. Financial policies revolving around sponsorship and incentives also determine, to a large extent, the country's participation in major international sports events (Rintaugu, 2005).

Personal Factors

Personal qualities of age, weight, height, physique and genetic endowment have a lot of implications on performance of the sport that one ventures into. For example, Kenya's athletes in long distance races are quite unique in terms of physique and genetic composition from the rugby players. Whereas the athletes appear more ectomorphic (lean), the rugby players, on the other hand predominantly appear mesomorphic (muscular) in stature. Similarly, physical conditions of speed, flexibility, endurance, agility and strength are essential requisites in different sporting events. Kenyan athletes' excellent performance in the long distance races can be attributed to endurance, while the sprint events in which Kenya's performance has been dismal require strength and speed.

A combination of psychological factors such as will-power, motivation, incentives and mental focus together with technical and tactical factors are crucial to performance in soccer in which Kenya has continuously performed dismally. Most of the time, the national soccer team is composed of new players who meet with new coaches and team managers on the eve of crucial matches. Furthermore, soccer training camps are too short and uncoordinated to allow the players to master the necessary team chemistry in terms of psychological preparation, tactical and technical improvement.

Historical Perspectives of Youth Sports and Recreation in Kenya

The current status of youth sports and recreation in Kenya is a product of events that have unfolded from the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial eras. In order to shape the future of youth sports and recreation, it is inevitable to have an analysis of historical events that have contributed to the current status of youth sports and recreation.

Sports during the Pre-Colonial Period (before 1895)

Early forms of sports and recreation activities are popularly referred to as 'traditional sports and games' or as 'indigenous sports and games' (Asembo, 2003). These early forms of sports and games were closely related to the activities that people engaged in to avail food and defend themselves against aggressors. The most prominent sports and recreation activities in most traditional Kenyan communities included: spear-throwing that was related to hunting and need for defense against hostile environments (Mazrui, 1986); running/racing which was geared towards meeting the need for food through hunting; swimming was also a common activity that was learnt due to the need for fishing and communication across large rivers and lakes; and wrestling was also widespread as a way of identifying strong members who would be relied upon to defend their communities.

However, for better understanding and appreciation of these games, scholars and researchers have classified them under different categories (Wanderi, 2000; Njororai, 2003). These include: *games of physical challenge* which comprised of traditional forms of wrestling, tug-of-war and the like; *games of physical skill and strategy* which included javelin-like throwing activities, cone activities, bow and arrow throwing, rolling, hoop play and others; group interaction games such as hide-and-seek games, singing and dancing; *games of imagination* in which participants initiated or aped the characters or traits attached to animals; *mind games* which were basically memory and problem-solving games that focused mainly on devising strategies of defeating opponents; *games of seasonal context* which were engaged in during certain seasons of the year like hunting of certain species of animals and swimming during rainy seasons.

Although the traditional forms of games were mainly for community survival and defense, they were beneficial in a number of other ways, including: preservation of the peoples' culture; fostering and maintaining community or group identity and developing character and personality traits.

Because various communities in Kenya had a sporting culture, and the fact that some of the traditional sports were more or less similar to the ones that were introduced by the colonialists, this provided ready opportunities for the entrenchment of regulated 'western' or 'modern' sports.

Sports during the Colonial Period (1895-1963)

The colonization of Kenya by the British in 1895, their declaration of the country as a colony of Britain in 1920 and their subsequent rule up to 1963 marked another chapter for sports in Kenya. It was during that colonial rule that the modern forms of sports and games were introduced in the country while the traditional ones were discarded as being primitive. The various forms of sports and games that had been popularized in Europe (in Britain in particular), North America and Asia during the World War I and II were also imposed on Kenya (Nteere, 1982; Nteere, 1990). The key milestones that were realized during this period were: introduction of the modern sports in Kenya, some of which were, unfortunately, played along racial lines. For instance, tennis, cricket, rugby and football were introduced by the British in the first part of 20th Century while Basketball was introduced by American missionaries in 1950s. According to Bhushan (1988), rugby and tennis were games that were strictly for whites only and hockey was preserved for Kenyans and Indians; development of Physical Training curriculum for schools that focused on the teaching of the modern sports; introduction of competitive sports in schools, communities and international levels in the 1950s. This marked Kenya's international competitions debut at the Olympic Games held in Melbourne, Australia; open spaces were set-aside in urban and rural areas to accommodate sporting activities. The colonial authorities allocated some fiscal resources for the establishment of sporting facilities and purchase of sports equipment. For instance, the introduction of swimming programmes in some schools is traced to the pre-independence period during which facilities were constructed; the colonial authorities also appointed several education commissions that highlighted the teaching of Physical Training (PT) and drill in the elementary schools. A good example is the Fraser Report on Education of 1909 which emphasized on drill and PT as one of the mandatory subjects at the elementary schools level. The Phelps – Stokes Commission Report of 1924 also highlighted the inclusion of recreation in school curriculum, and the main focus was PT and simple Calisthenics (East African Protectorate). The purpose of recreation was to develop learners' character through PT; founding of several national sports associations/federations that played a role in the management and administration of sports in the country as indicated on table 74 below

Table 74: Formation of National Sports Associations/Federations in Kenya

Sports Federation	Year Founded
Kenya Rugby Football Union	1921
Kenya Golf Union	1928
Kenya Amateur Athletic Association	1950
Kenya Cricket Association	1953
National Football Association	1956
Kenya Hockey Union	1956
Kenya Amateur Wrestling Association	1956

Source:Nteere,(1990)p.89

It is notable that these Federations/Associations have continued to administer and manage different sports disciplines in Kenya to date with diverse levels of success. However some of these associations are characterized by lack of transparency, accountability, ineptness, perennial wrangles and undemocratic practices.

Sports and Recreation in the Post – Colonial Period (1963 to date)

From the time Kenya attained independence from the British colonial rule in 1963, the successive post-colonial governments continued to embrace and develop sports. A number of measures and strategies were put in place to enhance the management and administration of sports in the country. The key milestones in creating structures of sports management include:

- Establishment of the Kenya National Sports Council (KNSC) in 1966 to coordinate the activities of the national sports federations and also assist in the preparation of national teams for the All-Africa Games
- Creation of the department of sports in the ministry in charge of sports in 1989 as a government arm that oversees sports programmes and activities in the country
- Establishment and operations of the National Olympic Committee of Kenya (NOCK) to facilitate Kenya's participation in the Olympic Games
- Establishment of national sports federations to coordinate and organize sporting activities in their respective sports disciplines
- Establishment of national sports federations for educational institutions to oversee sports programmes in the institutions
- Government's provision of 'some' funding for sports development in the annual financial budget; establishment local authorities welfare departments in the cities, municipal and county councils whose responsibilities, among others, to render sports services
- Establishment of a substantial number of government departments and other quasi – government organizations (parastatals) to have sports departments that organize and coordinate sports programmes for their employees.

Soon after independence, the post-colonial government sought to re-structure the education system in the country so as to infuse and propagate the traditional values of the indigenous people that had been eroded by the colonial masters. As such, several national commissions on education were appointed for this purpose, and their recommendations had some direct influence on the teaching of Physical Education (PE)⁸⁸ and development of sports for the youth in schools. The Kenya Education Commission (Ominde Commission) of 1964, for instance, emphasized

⁸⁸ An integral part of the education process which has as its aim, the development of physically, mentally, emotionally and socially fit citizens through the medium of physical activities which have been selected with a view of realising these outcomes (Beasal & Taylor, 1992; Coakley, 2005). In the Kenyan context, PE will refer to the activities which are scheduled in the schools time table for learners to go out of the classrooms and get engaged in physical activities under the guidance of a teacher.

on the inclusion of PE as a co-curricular activity in the schools curriculum. However, the subsequent commissions, committees and working parties on Education in Kenya such as National Committee on Education and Policies (Gachathi Report) of 1975, Presidential Working Party (Mackay Report) of 1981 and the Presidential Working Party (Kamunge Report) of 1988 only examined education system in total but did not focus on, or make recommendations on the status of PE and sports in the school system. This could explain the lukewarm attention accorded to PE and sports in schools, yet the youth need early initiation into PE and sports for their growth and development, character development and for talent identification. Since Physical Education is considered to be the foundation for future sports participation and performance of the youth, the Presidential Decree of 1980 of making PE a mandatory subject in all schools and the Teachers Training Colleges was a landmark decision for the future of youth in sports and recreation because, in principle, it stimulated the elevation of the level and status of PE and sports in educational institutions.

Due to the emphasis put on excelling in sports, it is at the advent of the post-colonial era that the country began to register substantial successes in the All-Africa Games, Commonwealth Games and Olympic Games as shown in the table 75 below.

Table 75: Kenya's Performance in All- Africa Games (1965-2007)

YEAR	VENUE	MEDALS			TOTAL	RANKING
		GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE		
1965	Brazzaville, Congo	8	11	4	23	3
1973	Lagos, Nigeria	9	11	18	38	3
1978	Algiers, Algeria	11	8	8	27	4
1987	Nairobi, Kenya	22	25	16	63	4
1991	Cairo, Egypt	13	17	18	48	4
1999	Johannesburg, South Africa	10	10	20	40	6
2003	Abuja, Nigeria	5	5	4	14	9
2007	Algiers, Algeria	13	15	10	38	6
TOTAL		91	102	98	291	

Source: Njororai,(2004)p.105.

Table 75 shows that Kenya's performance was very impressive as from 1965 to 2007 with 91 gold medals, 102 silver medals and 98 bronze medals. It is however important to note that majority of the medals were won in athletics and boxing. It is also notable that the best overall ranking of Kenya in the championships has was position three in 1965 and subsequently in 1973, while the worst ranking was position 9 in 2003. However, Kenya has continued to stamp her authority as a powerhouse in sports in Africa.

Beyond the impressive performance in the All-Africa Games, Kenya's performance in the larger Commonwealth Games is presented in table 76 below.

Table 76: Medals won in the Commonwealth Games (1954-2010)

YEAR	VENUE	MEDALS			TOTAL
		GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE	
1954	Vancouver, Canada	-	-	-	-
1958	Cardilt, Wales	-	-	2	2
1962	Perth, Australia	2	2	1	5

1966	Kingston, Jamaica	4	1	3	8
1970	Edinburg, Scotland	5	3	6	14
1974	Christchurch, New Zealand	7	2	9	18
1978	Edmonton, Canada	7	6	5	18
1982	Brisbane, Australia	4	2	4	10
1986	Edinburg, Scotland	-	-	-	-
1990	Auckland, New Zealand	6	9	3	18
1994	Victoria, Canada	7	4	8	19
1998	Kualalampur, Malaysia	7	5	4	16
2002	Manchester, England	4	8	4	16
2006	Melbourne, Australia	6	5	7	18
2010	New Delhi, India	12	11	9	32
TOTAL		71	58	75	204

Source: compiled from <http://www.espnstar.com>.

Table 76 shows that Kenya has won 71 gold medals, 58 silver medals and 75 bronze medals since the inception of the games. In the recently concluded 2010, Commonwealth Games, Kenya was able to win some medals in its non-traditional sport of swimming and emerged sixth overall out of the 36 countries which were in the medal bracket.

A summary of the medals that the country has won in the Olympic Games in the post-colonial era are as presented on table 77 below.

Table 77: Kenya's Medal Tally in Olympic Games (1964 – 2008)

MEDALS								
YEAR	VENUE	DISCIPLINE	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Subtotal	Total	Ranking in athletics
1964	Tokyo, Japan	Athletics	–	–	1	1	1	20
1968	Mexico city, Mexico	Athletics	4	3	1	8	9	3
		Boxing	–	–	1	1		
1972	Munich, West Germany	Athletics	2	2	2	6	9	5
		Boxing	–	1	2	3		
1976	Montreal, Canada	Boycotts	-	-	-	-	-	-
1980	Moscow, Russia	Boycotts	-	-	-	-	-	-
1984	Los Angeles, USA	Athletics	1	-	1	2	3	14
		Boxing	–	–	1	1		
1988	Seoul, South Korea	Athletics	4	2	1	7	9	4
		Boxing	1	-	1	2		
1992	Barcelona, Spain	Athletics	2	4	2	8	8	4
1996	Atlanta, USA	Athletics	1	4	3	8	8	4
2000	Sydney, Australia	Athletics	2	3	2	7	7	4
2004	Athens, Greece	Athletics	1	4	2	7	7	4
2008	Beijing, China	Athletics	5	5	4	14	14	3
		TOTAL	23	28	24	75		

Source: Compiled from <http://www.databaseolympics.com>.

From table 77, it is apparent that since 1964, Kenya has won a total of 75 Olympic medals with 23 being gold medals, 28 silver medals and 24 bronze medals. The largest proportion of these medals (91%) has been won in athletics and 9% have been won in boxing. Although Kenya has also been presenting teams in field hockey, volleyball (women), swimming, rowing, judo, shooting, weightlifting and wrestling during the Olympics, there has not been much success in these sports disciplines. Even in field hockey in which Kenya displayed credible performance in the 1970s and 1980s, the country was relegated to the last position in 1988 and never qualified for the Olympic Games thereafter.

Driving Forces for Sports Participation among the Youth in Kenya

As observed by Coakley (2005), socialization into sports is an ongoing rather than a discrete process. Consequently, different socio-cultural and economic forces continue to influence youth in sports and recreation. In summary, some of the driving forces that influence youth into involvement in sports and recreation in Kenya include: significant others such as family, friends, teachers and coaches; socializing agencies such as educational institutions/schools, NGOs, religious organizations and mass media; government policies and institutions such as sports associations/federations and local authorities; corporate partnerships; and sports icons.

Significant Others

The role of significant others such as family, friends, teachers and coaches continues to ensure that youth are introduced and encouraged in sports. Significant others can be role models, pay activity fees, training partners, provide encouragement and reinforcement, evaluators of performance, instructors etc. Consequently, they play the role of initiating and exposing young people to play and assist in identifying talent (Rintaugu, 2005). However, sports and recreational activities are not appreciated by all. Some parents for example can insist that they send children to school to study and not play sports. However with increased earnings and fame by elite athletes, some parents are encouraging their children to balance their pursuit for education with sports.

Socializing Agencies

Socializing agencies such as educational institutions/schools, NGOs, religious organizations, and mass media continue to influence socialization of the youth into sports.

Educational Institutions/schools

Schools continue to provide affordable sports facilities, equipment and programmes, teachers/coaches and an environment that is conducive for sports participation. Some educational institutions have rich histories of combining both sports and academia through competitions such as inter-house, inter-streams and inter-classes games. Some secondary schools like Friends School Kamusinga have continued to dominate in secondary school sports competitions in hockey, rugby, and basketball and at the same time performed well in drama and music festivals. Further, the school continues to perform very well in national examinations (Rintaugu, 2005).

In the 2010 secondary schools games competitions, the success of national schools like Maseno high school in basketball and Mangu High School in hockey is indicative of the fact that good academic performance and excellence in extra-curricular activities can occur in tandem. These schools serve as important reservoirs of sports talent. Other such institutions that have been keen and embraced particular sports disciplines should be identified jointly by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Education and the various national sports federations and established as 'model' schools or 'centers of sports excellence'. The schools would be evenly spread throughout the country and a regional balance ensured where school-based and vacation-based sports programmes will be run. The inclusion of such a move in the sports policy would be imperative so that the implementation and operation of the centers is not hampered by other political interests.

Physical Education (PE) is taught at almost all levels of education. While at primary school it is compulsory, in secondary school it is scheduled in the time table. However, the importance of PE has not received homogenous appreciation in all the secondary schools. PE periods are used to teach and revise mathematics and sciences because the school curriculum seems to emphasize the cognitive domain of learning at the expense of the effective and

psychomotor domains of education. The PE Curriculum is not also given the requisite respect it deserves due to the fact that it is not examined. Indeed as the philosophers of the mediaeval period like Plato, Socrates and Aristotle noted, a healthy mind needs to survive in health body.

Non-Governmental Organizations

In Kenya, various Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have come out explicitly to support and sponsor youth sport events. UNICEF in collaboration with other partners has continued to organize soccer tournaments exclusively for young children. Recently UNICEF in collaboration with the Ministry of Education sponsored selected secondary school students to improve their sporting skills in 8 secondary schools and selected some 'centers of excellence' in different sport disciplines. The Mathare Youth Sports Association (MYSA) has continued to partner with other agencies such as United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), World Lutheran Foundation and the Netherlands Government to champion the course of HIV/AIDS awareness, garbage collection, environment and conflict resolution (Nyanjom, 2010).

Case Study 8 : The Mathare Youth Sports Association (MYSA)

The Mathare Youth Sports Association (MYSA) was started in 1987 to assist youth Mathare slums in Nairobi to get involved in active sports (mainly football) as a way of keeping young people from engaging in anti-social behaviour. MYSA has been able to link participation in sports with environmental clean-ups, AIDS prevention and leadership training among over 20,000 young people who are involved. The key achievements of MYSA include: community service in terms of conducting clean-up activities that are geared towards improving the environment in the slums; creating awareness on key social issues such as HIV and AIDS and drug use and abuse; fighting poverty in the slums by creating job opportunities and seeking scholarships for young people to pursue their education; initiation of the Jailed Youth Programme whose main objective is to assist youth from the slums get released from remand homes or jail and reunite them with their families; initiate football tournaments between different ethnic communities after the 2008 post-election violence in order to promote peace and reconciliation. The initiative has been extended to Kakuma refugee camps.

MYSA launched a sport and community leadership academy in 2000 for all its zones. The academy courses aim to help these young athletes to: improve their fitness, training, diet and performance; increase their knowledge and skills in coaching and refereeing; understanding and coping better with personal health and adolescent life challenges among their peers and expanding their organizational and leadership in order to help other young people in their schools and community.

It is notable that MYSA has been able to transform the lives of thousands of youth in their zones and it would be prudent for other similar organizations to be started countrywide.

Source: <http://www.mysakenya.org/>

Religious Organizations

Some religious institutions have provided minimal facilities for youth to be involved in sports and recreational activities such as Nairobi Pentecostal Church (NPC) which sponsors teams to play basketball in the national leagues. It is notable that the first basketball court in this country was pioneered by the Catholic Church at Kilimambogo Teachers College. Up to date, basketball is well established within the environs of Kilimambogo parish.

Mass Media

Both print and electronic mass media have continued to exert a lot of influence on youth participation in sports and recreation. Youth soccer tournaments like *Sakata ball* are captured live by the media. The global coverage of international sporting events including the availability of exclusive sports channels influence many young people into sports. The premier leagues in England attract a lot of interest and followership across the country. Many youngsters continue to rally their support behind Manchester United, Arsenal, Chelsea and Liverpool among others. The print media on the other hand carries 4 pages on sports daily.

Government Policies and Institutions

The role of government in promoting youth sports and recreation is paramount. Its share of functions include: formulation of sports/recreation policies and facilitation of sports programmes; development of public sports and recreation management structures, development of facilities, and protection of public interests in matters of sports and recreation.

Through the Presidential decree of 1980 that made PE and sports compulsory in all educational institutions ensured that up to date, PE is scheduled in the school timetable in both primary and secondary schools and is an examinable subject in Teacher training colleges.

To underscore the governments concern about sports in Kenya, the President Mwai Kibaki asserted that ‘the government plans to take sports more seriously. Not only is it an important pastime but Kenyans are good at it. Success in sport changes the lives of many Kenyans every year. It gives us something to be proud of as a nation and also promotes healthy lifestyles. The government plans to deal with corruption and mismanagement in this sector as these trends negatively affect our athletes and have undermined the standards of sports like soccer’ (Nyanjom, 2010pg.6).

The Ministry of Youth and Sports (MOYAS) was created among other things to enhance youth participation in sports. Subsequently, the government through Vision 2030 committed to remit one million Kenya shillings (approximately US\$10,000) per constituency for sports and recreation.

Government policies created in relation to sports and recreation include the Kenya National Youth Policy (KNYP) and the draft Kenya National Sports Policy (KNSP). These continue to enhance the positive impact of sports on youth development.

Kenya National Youth Policy (KNYP)

KNYP acknowledges that participation in physical activities contributes to promotion of peace, unity and understanding among the youth and to a great extent reduces idling. Consequently, KNYP proposes the following broad strategies to address the concerns of sports and recreation for the youth in Kenya.

- Establish and improve accessibility to recreation and sporting facilities in schools, communities, villages and provide them with trained personnel to assist in identifying and developing young people’s talents.
- Use sporting activities as a channel of advocacy and campaign for behavioural change in areas such as HIV/AIDS and drug abuse among the youth. After the post electoral conflict in 2008, promotion of peace and national cohesion has become a major agenda. Consequently, sports have been used as the vehicle to implement this programme.
- MOYAS is responsible for sports activities and will liaise with youth organizations to ensure that sports men and women are protected from exploitation by clubs and sport agencies.
- Improve the remuneration given to sports persons who represent the nation in various sporting disciplines.
- Promotion of traditional games as a way of recreation and culture preservation.
- Gazetting of sporting facilities and recreational spaces.
- Encourage youth representation in sports decision making bodies countrywide.
- Streamline the dysfunctional National Youth Development Programme (NYDP) by creating awareness at community level and solicit financial support from private sector, development partners and other stake holders to make sports more effective.

Although KNYP has good provisions, it also has shortfalls. First, KNYP addresses the Kenyan youth as a block in terms of years, yet the youth are operating at different levels of maturation and growth. Second, KNYP gives no credence to sports or youth engaged in sports outside the formal institutions yet a significant number of youth operate outside these formal set-ups. Third, KNYP does not acknowledge that a majority of the youth are engaged

in passive sporting leisure activities such as watching sports on TV, cheering ongoing matches or playing sports computer games.

Kenya National Sports Policy (KNSP)

The Session Paper No.3 of 2005 on Sport Development (March,2005) referred to as the draft Kenya National Sports Policy (KNSP) requires sports organizations to enhance investment and funding especially for grassroots programmes based on comprehensive, integrated medium and long-term development plans with accompanying annual work plans. It acknowledges different categories of sports, both traditional and modern such as mass sports from competitive sports and sports for the aged, disabled, youth and women. It calls for establishment of a national sports institute which would set standards, carry out training documentation and archive records. It recognizes the destructive potential of disputes requiring the development of an “ultimate, authoritative and neutral dispute resolution mechanism (Nyanjom, 2010). The draft policy still remains a good blue-print which is yet to be passed by parliament.

However, as far as youth and sports are concerned the KNSP does not indicate when, where and how the above proposals will be implemented. It also does not capture the time-frame for implementation and does not show the role of the central government, local authorities’ and other agencies in sports development. The draft does not capture the aspirations of youth outside formalized settings. The draft is also very general and does not capture the fact that different sports disciplines in this country enjoy different status. Football for example is played in every village while rugby, cricket and hockey can be categorized as elite sports only accessible to a few young people.

Other Countries policies and programmes

Countries like Nigeria, England and USA have policies and programmes that help improve their sports performance.

Nigeria

Nigeria has a National Sports Development Policy (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1989) which identifies five specific programme areas: sports development; voluntary organization; research and planning; education and training; and mobilization of resources for sports. The Government also publishes guidelines for implementing the sports development policy. The national sports policy summarizes the role of government sports development as: policy formulation; coordination and monitoring; staff development; resource mobilization; and research funding. To illustrate governments’ commitment towards sports promotion, General Ibrahim Babangida, a former Nigeria Head of State was quoted staying “*we as a nation are entitled to a great deal of pride in the achievement of our sports men and women over the years for the honours done to us a nation by the successes of athletes and that is the reasons why winners are handsomely rewarded for them to continue to do well in their sports (Ikulayo, 1994:39).*”

United States of America

In the USA, Presidents’ Council on physical fitness and sports advice the president through the Secretary of Health and Human services about physical activity, fitness and sports and recommends programs to promote regular physical activity for the health of Americans. The US congress is involved in several aspects of sports, notably: gender equity in college athletics; illegal drugs in professional sports; sports broadcasting; and the application of anti-trust law to sports leagues for example the Title IX Education amendments of 1972 which states that “*No person in the US shall on the basis of sex be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal assistance*” (McPherson, Curtis and Loy, 1989: 541).

Today, the President’s Council promotes daily moderate physical activity for disease prevention and health, vigorous physical activity, stretching and strength training for fitness, and added health benefits, including values of sportsmanship. It collaborates with federal state and local agencies, private sector and non-profit organizations to achieve mutual goals and objectives. The President’s Council has assembled different honours and awards to

ensure that Americans head a physically active lifestyle. Some of the Awards include: Presidents Challenge; the Presidential Active Lifestyle Award (PALA); state champion award; and national school demonstration program.

England

In England there have been very numerous policy statements on youth sports and recreation. For example, in December 2002 the government published 'Game Plan' a strategy for delivering government's sports and physical activity objectives (Maguire, 1999). The review of national sport effort and resources (Lloyd, 2005) identified that with so many interested parties, it was vital to develop a system for the delivery of sport in England which is simple, systematic and joined-up overcoming the inefficiencies identified in Game Plan. Game Plan lay emphasis on collaboration between local authorities, other public sector agencies, and partners, involvement of community members not only in planning and decision making but also in measuring the performance of public sector agencies. The Game Plan was out to increase participation in cultural and sporting opportunities by adults and young people, as well as increase participation in educational institutions.

Beyond the Game Plan, the ambition of 'Sport England' is to lead and support the development of a holistic, coherent and equality-assured department of sports that ensures everybody no matter where they live or their personal circumstances is able to access high quality sporting opportunities and truly meets their personal needs (Sports England, 2007). Other sports policies in England address issues bordering on volunteering in sport, healthy policies as well as performance in global competitions. It is important to note that just like in USA, sports policies in England cater for sports and recreation, healthy and physical activity patterns. The policies also address healthy issues of people in the lower economic status, environmental sustainability and raising the standards of physical activity and sports in physical educational institutions.

Also published in 2004 'The framework for Sport in England' envisions England to be the most active and successful sporting nation in the world. The target of the framework was to increase participation in sports and active recreation in England by 1% annually. The expected outcomes of the framework for sports in England was: improving levels of performance in sports; widening access to sports and active recreation; improving health and well being; creating stronger and safer communities; improving education; and benefiting the economy.

It is apparent that the policies in the USA and England are multi-faceted, multi-sectoral and all encompassing as opposed to the policies in Kenya and Nigeria which are geared towards sports competitions. Time has come for the government of Kenya to worry about the fitness levels of its people by putting in place policies which will trigger mass participation in regular physical activities as opposed to competitive sports only.

National Sports Federations (NSFs)

Sport Federations such as KFF, KVF and KRFU continue to have youth competitions such as under-17 and under 20's. They second coaches to regions and schools where their sports disciplines are dominant. They also enhance their sports through youth centers and competitions. Thus, the federations/associations identify and develop talent by coordinating, organizing and running youth sports programmes. However some of these federations are yet to have countywide access and many times their impact is only felt in urban areas. Athletics Kenya has invested heavily in all the provinces and it works hand in hand with primary schools and secondary schools. It has competitive units within the Kenya police, armed forces and the universities. This may be the reason behind Kenya's dominance in athletics as talent is identified and nurtured early from all the provinces.

National Olympic Committee (NOC)

The main function of the National Olympic Committee of Kenya (NOC-K) which is an affiliate of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) is to ensure the country's participation in the Olympic Games. Other than working closely with the national sports federations to identify and assemble young sportsmen and sportswomen for the Olympic Games, NOC-K is charged with the responsibility of fund-raising for the country's participation in the games. It is notable that NOC-K has done this over the years, but with minimal success.

Local Authorities

One of the key responsibilities of the local authorities is to render social and welfare services to the public. Within this broad area of responsibility are provisions of sports and recreation services. The local authorities are specifically expected to: set aside space for youth sports and recreation; assist with development and maintenance of sports facilities; and be involved in the coordination and organization of sports and recreation programmes for the youth. It is notable that some renowned Kenyan boxers like Robert Wangila (a gold medalist in 1984 Seoul, Korea Olympic Games) learnt and mastered boxing from various city council facilities like Kaloleni and Bahati social halls.

Corporate Partnerships

Corporate partnerships such as Standard Chartered Bank of Kenya, National Bank, KCC, Eveready, Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB), Kenya Airways, Brookside Dairy, East African Portland Cement and Safaricom continue to sponsor sporting activities in different disciplines and different levels of competitions. Some of the corporate bodies have been keen on giving financial rewards to medals-winners after international competitions. A number of successful athletes are being used as ambassadors of various corporations such as coca-cola.

Due to the popularity of sports in Kenya, many commercial organizations in the country have been keen on advertising and marketing their goods and services through sporting activities thus enabling them to maximize profits through increased sales of their products and services. The recently concluded Africa Athletic Championship hosted in Nairobi had Safaricom and National Bank of Kenya as the major sponsors. In 2010, KCB sponsored Safari rally, National Cross-country and tennis championships by over Kshs.30 million (approximately US\$300,000)

Sports Icons and their Foundations

Kenyan sports icons have continued to influence youth in Kenya into sports through global recognition and the financial rewards they receive. Through local initiatives and foundations, Kipchoge Keino, Tecla Loroupe and Henry Wanyoike have been some of the role models that have influenced young athletes in Rift valley.

Kipchoge Keino

Kipchoge Keino¹ directed his energy and resources towards the development of education and support for the disadvantaged people in the country. He set up the Kipkeino School which houses, feeds and educates orphans in Eldoret. The Kipkeino secondary school has integrated environmental care and Olympic values in the curriculum to enable students to learn about environmental conservation, values of respect for others, fair play and excellence.

Tecla Cheptike Loroupe

Tecla Cheptike Loroupe, a three-time World Half-marathon champion, established the Tecla Loroupe Peace Foundation in 2003 whose main objectives are to bring about social interaction and integration among warring communities in the greater Horn of Africa and encourage development and other social change processes. The foundation organizes annual peace races among various communities within the region which encourage interaction and building trust among the warring communities. The peace races include: the Moroto-Uganda Peace Race; Southern Sudan Peace Race; Tana-River Peace Race; Kapenguria Peace Race; Maralal Peace Race; Turkana peace race; and the Great Turkwel Peace and beauty percent . To reduce cattle rustling, the foundation has set up the Tecla Loroupe reformed warriors rehabilitation and training camp which provides support to warriors to engage in competitive sports, business enterprises and small scale agricultural business and facilitates them in the warrior-to-warrior peacemaking.

The Tecla Loroupe foundation is also involved in the development of education. In addition to the establishment of the Tecla Loroupe Academy, the foundation supports and strengthens existing schools by providing them with computers and learning materials such as books, pens, writing chalk and desks. The foundation in collaboration with its partners pays fees for children from poor families and assists children in the greater horn of Africa who have excelled in examinations to secure scholarships for further studies both locally and abroad. The key pro-

1 A legendary athlete and honorary member of the International Olympic Committee

grammes of the Tecla Loroupe foundation include: peace building and conflict mitigation; education for peace programme; enterprise and livelihood programme; environment for peace; research, media and communication.

Henry Wanyoike

Henry Wanyoike has been involved in community development projects in the country. Visually-impaired, Wanyoike has been a world record holder of 5,000 and 10,000 meters races in the Paralympic games, and has been the fastest visually-impaired marathon and half-marathon runner in the world. He started and registered the Henry Wanyoike foundation which is involved in many activities, one being environmental conservation through tree-planting. The foundation has also been involved in seeking financial support for the internally displaced persons, orphans, disabled, vulnerable children and youth for their socio-economic empowerment by organizing sponsored running events and partnering with corporate organizations. The foundation supports the disabled through socio-economic empowerment. It gives grants to start income generating programs, paying school fees for the disabled and advocates for disability rights.

Macdonald Mariga

The recent success of Mariga with Inter-Milan FC, is likely to influence a significant number of young people to continue exploiting their opportunities in soccer.

Social cultural factors influencing youth into sports

Sports are recognized as a symbol of national unity in Kenya. Sports have rightly acted as a tool for integration and co-existence of the people (Mwisukha and Gitonga, 2009). Whenever local teams compete against foreign ones, Kenyans regardless of ethnic, racial and religious differences come together in solidarity to support their teams. Sports are used as a tool for bringing about national popularity and recognition. Indeed, our prowess in athletics, rugby and cricket has brought pride and international recognition to Kenya. The ceremonial presentation of medals to successful sportsmen and women has helped a great deal in exposing Kenya to the rest of the world.

The post election violence (PEV) in the 2007 has led many NGOs and religious institutions to use sports as a medium of peaceful co-existence and conflict resolution. It is notable that the Tecla Loroupe Peace Foundation has done remarkable work of reducing tension among warring communities in the Great North region of East Africa.

Modern sports effectively provide an avenue through which people can express and preserve their cultural heritage. Through traditional dances, songs, warrior and warrior-like activities, magic and superstitious acts, traditional beliefs and practices which characterize Africa's culture can be expressed. For example, the *Isukuti* beats are always heard when AFC Leopards are playing a match.

Sports and Economic Development

Sport has played a vital role towards national development in Kenya. The Ministry of Youth and Sports has employed personnel to handle sport matters up to the District level and the Ministry of Education employs inspectors and coordinators of sport activities, universities and all educational institutions have employed personnel to cater for the sports needs of the students. The army, National Youth Services, the police and the prisons often use excellence or talent in sports as one criterion for recruitment of officers. It is common to find that a majority of the medals won in the Olympics has been by athletes from the uniformed forces.

Parastatals, NGO's and some private sector organizations employ sports and recreational managers, coaches and trainers for their institutions. Good examples of these parastatals include Kenya Ports Authority, Kenya Pipeline, Kenya Power and Lighting Company, and Kenya Commercial Bank. However, the collapse of some major sport competitions like KECOSO left some of the parastatals not able to recruit athletes.

Both private and public organizations have set-up recreational facilities such as stadia, swimming pools and fitness facilities to cater for the employees sporting and recreational needs. Personnel are equally employed to carry out routine maintenance and sports/recreational related work.

The prevalence of athletic scholarships has also enabled many youth to venture into sports.

Hosting of major continental and international events such as All-Africa Games in 1987, Safari Sevens, Golf tournaments, International Cross-Country in 2008 in Mombasa and the Senior African Athletic Championship in 2010 in Nairobi is a gateway to tourism. The Lewa downs Marathon is double-edged as it is meant to ensure environmental conservation but also encourage tourism. Through a multiplier effect, people visiting the Rift valley to scout for athletic talent improve businesses in the region especially in airports, hotels, bars and restaurants.

During the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, Kenya's contingent of 78 people (51 athletes and 27 officials) costed Kshs. 48 million (approximately US\$ 480,000) to participate in the games. Consequently this translated into Kshs. 6.8m (approximately US\$ 68,000) for each medal won and each person in the contingent used up Kshs.615, 384 (approximately US\$ 6,154).

According to Mwisukha and Gitonga (2009), approximately Kshs.500 million (approximately US\$ 5,000,000) a year is earned by athletes in prize money and endorsements in Europe, Asia and America come back into the local economy. Some of the richest Kenyan athletes have invested heavily in high-rise buildings, high altitude training camps and colleges, farms and agricultural enterprises.

The President's speech on 28th March 2010 during the closing ceremony of 2010 Kenya Open Golf championship, outlined the government allocations to sport during this financial year as shown in the table 78

Table 78: Government Allocation to Sports during 2009/2010 Financial Year

ACTIVITY	AMOUNT (KSHS) (in Millions)	AMOUNT (in US\$)
Refurbishing of warm-up track at Nyayo Stadium	18	180,000
Rehabilitation of Mombasa Municipal Stadium	29	290,000
Upgrading of Kipchoge Keino Stadium, Eldoret	100	1,000,000
Construction of talent Academy at Kasarani	100	1,000,000
Rehabilitation of Moi International Sports Complex, Kasarani	900	9,000,000
All Africa Athletic Championship	200	2,000,000
TOTAL	1,337	13,470,000

Source: Presidential speech on 28th March 2010.

The above allocation of Kshs.1.347 billion (Approximately US\$ 13.47 million) excludes the amount of money used to fund different teams involved in external competitions, sport officers and the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

Uncertainties and Emerging Trends

As much as Kenya has asserted its authority in global competitive sports especially in athletics (long distance races), swimming and rugby (sevens version), there are underlying uncertainties and emerging trends that are likely to influence sports in the future. These include but are not limited to the following.

Management of sports

The management of our sports federations and associations is currently by old people. Emerging trends where young people are vying for executive positions in the federations/associations will influence sports the direction sports takes in the future.

Due to the lack of effective and efficient coordination of soccer activities in the country, there have been perennial wrangles within and between FKL, KFF, FIFA and the Kenya government. Consequently, the government is not able to properly manage football due to the influence of FIFA. Kenyans are thus putting their efforts towards the organization of sports outside the government and many soccer competitions in and between constituencies, estates and provinces such as 'Ligi Ndogo' and 'Sakata Ball' are organized by different private parties with the support of corporate and non-governmental organizations. These wrangles affect the performance of the national football team, *Harambee Stars*. As a result, majority of the youth are keen on football matches from other countries like Europe. Needless to say, the FA league in England attracts a lot of attention while matches involving the national team attract very few spectators. It is also apparent that majority of Kenyans are shifting their interests into other sports disciplines like rugby, athletics and cricket. These disciplines have their federations or associations being doing well not only in performance but also in the administration and management of the sports.

Revival of traditional sports

It is notable that there are concerted efforts by different groups to revive some traditional sports and games. For example, bull fighting is gaining a lot of mileage in Western province. Boat races in Lake Victoria and in the Indian Ocean together with donkey races and cultural festivals in Lamu are attracting a lot of funding from the corporate and non-governmental organizations. All in all, the concern is how to modernize the traditional sports and games to create and maintain interest and support. Anecdotal evidence suggests that there are efforts towards registration of Kenya Federation of Traditional Games and Sports (KFTGS).

Merging sports with other social issues

Kenya's hosting of major continental and international events has led to the merging of sports events with tourism. As noted earlier, the Lewa Downs marathon and the Sokoto marathon were organized to incorporate environmental conservation and tourism. Other such initiatives include the Standard Chartered Marathon which seeks to raise funds for the treatment of the visually impaired. Dettol heart runs seek to raise surgery funds for children with heart conditions while cancer walks e.g. by Nairobi hospital in 2011 is organized to help raise funds for the treatment of cancer patients. Merging of sports with addressing various social issues is likely to increase.

Talent development

There has been an increasing recognition that youth can make a livelihood out of talent. As a result, the formalization of talent identification and nurturing through talent academies is being done. It is very common to see parents especially of the upper and middle classes accompanying their children over the weekends into the various sports centers/talents academies for training and competition. When some of the parents are not able, they hire part-time coaches to train their children.

The aerobics craze

The emergence of aerobics and gymnasium centers in the urban and pre-urban areas has been as a result of the "fitness boom" of the 1980's. Consequently, a significant number of youth are concerned with their fitness levels and appearance/bodily appeal than in competitive sports.

The provision of dual citizenship

The new Constitution in Kenya has ushered in the dual citizenship under the Bill of Rights thus creating a situation where elite sports men and women will enjoy Kenya's citizenship and that of another country. This implies that the sports men and women will have to make decisions as to which country to represent during global competitions. The sports persons are likely to be based in foreign countries where the sports infrastructure is very good. However, it also means that they are not present as role models to young up-coming sports men and women. Though this is likely to increase remittances from the Diaspora, it may also imply that the elite athletes invest their resources elsewhere and not necessarily in Kenya.

Hosting prestigious sporting events

Kenya is a leader in selected sports in the region thus international events will continue to be hosted in the country thus promoting tourism and economic development .

The uneven distribution of sports infrastructure

The uneven distribution of sports infrastructure and resources especially in urban and rural areas has left some sports only tenable in urban settings. The same case applies to the disparity in sport infrastructure between the affluent suburbs and the slums in urban areas. This creates a situation where some sports are not taught to the majority poor like golf and cricket thus minimizing our competitive potential.

The enactment of a sports policy

A sports policy levels the playing field and creates parameters within which to operate from. Recently the Minister for youth and sports re-launched the sports policy which is yet to be debated in parliament. The absence of a sports policy 47 years after independence negates the objectives of proactive planning and effective management of sports.

Infiltration of vices that limit youth participation in sports

Presence of organized militia groups, vigilantes and gangs directly affects youth participation in sports. Forceful recruitment into the group's membership curtails opportunities for these young people to participate in sports. Practices such as sniffing of tobacco and other drugs as well as heavy alcohol consumption are counterproductive in sports.

Nature of selection of top sports men and women

The natural selection demands that only the best survive. There are very limited opportunities for young people with rudimentary skills and great potential to perfect their skills. This means that unless one is very good, the system of selection kills rather than nurtures potential. As a result, there is a lot of unexploited talent and there are inadequate opportunities (in terms of consistent training and encouragement) for the youth to feel that sports is an avenue for career development.

Way Forward

In order to lay a foundation for talent identification and development in sports among young people who spend a significant proportion of their time in school, the teaching of PE in primary schools, secondary schools and colleges needs to be enforced. It is through the teaching of PE that motor development, exposition of talent, stimulation of the interest of youth in play and cultivation of a sporting culture amongst the youth can be made possible. Success in enforcing the teaching of the subject will be achieved if the government and other stakeholders adequately employ the necessary human resource who ensuring quality training.

The annual inter-school and inter-colleges tournaments have been emphasized upon and regularly organized as a major avenue for identification of sports talent. The games teachers and technical personnel in the sports federations are involved in the organization of the championships and scouting for the required talent. However, other than the few who move on to participate at the national level, majority of the talented youth are not given an opportunity to advance their skills. Through consistent training MYSA has produced a few players in major European soccer clubs. Numerous athletic training camps in Rift Valley have also produced world beaters in the long distant races. This evidences the fact that such organizations countrywide can help maximize sports potential among our young people.

The availability and condition of sports facilities is a factor that has a great bearing on exposure of youth to sports. Deliberate efforts by the principal stakeholders (Government, local authorities, parastatals, non-governmental or-

ganizations, SSMB, formal institutions and private initiatives) must therefore, be made to avail accessible outdoor and indoor sports facilities for the youth with minimal bureaucratic and financial requisites.

In order to ensure effective and efficient coordination of sports programmes in the country, the hierarchy of sports management should be streamlined. The Department of Sports, the Kenya National Sports Council and the National Sports Federations must be seen to operate as a team. Additionally, a fit and proper persons test should be adopted and stringently carried out to ensure that clubs are owned and/or run by people who want to see clubs succeed and espouse values aimed at promoting the greater interests of the sport.

In order to attract more youth into sports and enhance their chances of excelling, the national sports federations should consider introducing and nurturing professional sports. Indeed, many countries in the developed world have made a tremendous shift from sports amateurism to sports professionalism.

So as to regulate the management of youth sports and recreation, the enactment and enforcement of a national sports policy to give direction to the development of sports and recreation is mandatory. The policy should specify the structure and hierarchy for sports management in the country, including clearly outlining the roles of the various organizations in the management of sports. There should also be consideration for the provision of a contributory retirement scheme for national sports teams as incentive for their service to the country.

The exodus of elite athletes to other countries denies the country the benefit of sharing the glory of their successes. The new constitution which has provision for dual citizenship may curtail the above scenario. However, addressing the factors that motivate them into leaving the country such as state-of-the-art facilities and equipment, attractive remuneration and professional technical personnel will have to be addressed.

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