

Azerbaijan

'I really want to go to university. I want to become a lawyer. Playing volleyball and excelling in it, has given me the strength to believe I will achieve my dream.' Aygul, 17, Azerbaijan

Changing Lives

The programme has been in place here since 2007 and has generated some remarkable results, particularly in reaching marginalised young people – particularly girls, displaced children, children living in institutions and children with a disability. International Inspiration is active in seven districts across Azerbaijan, including two areas with a high concentration of people displaced by the conflict with Armenia. Playgrounds have been renovated, providing safe places for children of all backgrounds and abilities to have fun and practice sport.

Reasons to celebrate:

- More than 105,000 children and young people in Azerbaijan have taken part in International Inspiration sports camps, festivals and community events.
- New laws shaped by International Inspiration, will provide more sport opportunities for children and young people, and will create better and safer places to play.
- More children with a disability have been given the chance to play football and volleyball.

Improving disability sport

Coaches are now more qualified and skilled, and better informed about the value of sport for those with a disability. Work has been done to ensure that disabled children are included in sporting events together with other children, through training young leaders and influencing attitudes.

Case studies

A chance to play

Elvira is passionate about sport. She loves running and recently represented her college. Elvira lives in an area that is home to many people displaced by the conflict with Armenia. Before International Inspiration arrived she had little opportunity to play sport.

Twice a year, Elvira now joins a five-day Community Sport Camp. She has the opportunity to play sport with other young people, while learning new life skills. More than 12,000 children across Azerbaijan have attended camps like these since International Inspiration began.

'We are not here just to play or do games. We are here to learn about ourselves.' Elvira, age 19.

Increasing attendance in schools

Azer Ahmadov is one Azeri teacher who has received International Inspiration training.

Ahmadov said: 'Thanks to International Inspiration our high school children's interest in PE lessons has been raised enormously. It has impacted on the attendance of younger children as they are inspired to learn new skills from older school children.'

In addition to encouraging attendance, Ahmadov believes he has also gained new skills and confidence teaching children with different abilities.

Bangladesh

'Before International Inspiration I didn't have discipline and I didn't know how to interact with different people. Now that has changed, I am disciplined and I enjoy leading other students.' Afrina, young leader, Bangladesh

Changing lives

In Bangladesh, International Inspiration is using sport and play to empower girls, provide opportunities for children with a disability and promote communication between different ethnicities. Importantly, in a country prone to flooding, more than 28,500 children are learning survival swimming.

Reasons to celebrate:

- 28,500 children have learned swimming survival techniques.
- 125,000 children and young people have taken part in indoor and outdoor sports, including athletics, football, cricket and volleyball.
- 200,000 parents and community leaders are actively supporting girls' participation in sports.

Empowering girls

Nearly one in three girls in Bangladesh are married by the age of 15. International Inspiration is helping to tackle social norms such as this. Eleven thousand girls have had the opportunity to try sports like athletics, cricket and volleyball in a safe environment, with these strengthening their self-confidence and their belief that they have the right to make the decisions that shape their lives. Girls are being given key-life skills through sport leadership training. They are encouraged to discuss social issues that may affect them such as early marriage, the practice of dowry or reproductive health issues.

Survival swimming

Currently, many children drown in Bangladesh: by the age of 10, fewer than half of children know how to swim, and annually an estimated 17,000 children drown. International Inspiration is working with the Bangladesh Swimming Federation on a SwimSafe project, teaching survival-swimming techniques to non-swimmers.

Case studies:

Swimming for life

Parvez was a shy 10-year old boy from the slums of Mirpur near the capital Dhaka when he was first spotted by the Bangladesh Swimming Federation.

Before he learned how to swim, Parvez had only managed to complete one term of school. He was destined to become a rickshaw driver like his uncle. Thanks to International Inspiration's SwimSafe project, Parvez's fortunes have transformed. Now coaches regard him as a future national butterfly champion and possible even an international competitor.

Parvez said: 'Before I started the swimming lessons, I was a bit scared of the water. I wanted to play with my friends so I would still go, but I'd stay in the shallow parts. Now I swim anywhere.'

His achievements have also inspired his friends to follow in his footsteps and take up swimming: 'Now a lot of my friends want to take swimming lessons too, and a lot of them already have.'

Addressing the gender divide

As a result of advocacy campaigns, over 200,000 parents and community leaders are now actively supporting girls' engagement in the programme.

Seventeen-year-old Khaleda, is one girl who has benefitted: 'Before I was involved with the project, my parents didn't listen to my voice. Now, they respect my decisions and opinions.'

Brazil

'It is better to get involved in volunteering rather than drugs on the streets. I encourage people to get involved in International Inspiration. It's full of good experiences and can help you achieve your own goals.' Cibeles, 18, Brazil
Changing lives

Brazil is preparing to host the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. International Inspiration is active in Brazil's north-eastern region, where 13 million children live but very few PE teachers or sports facilities.

Reasons to celebrate:

- More than 700,000 children and young people have been joined the programme since 2007.
- There has been an increase in the number of PE teachers by up to 80
- More than 32,000 children took part in 40 sports festivals across the region in 2009. Half of these children came from poor rural areas.

Changing national policies

International Inspiration is supporting 'Segundo Tempo', a national after-school scheme, which focuses on sporting activities. Through this project, four million disadvantaged young people who would otherwise not have the opportunity to access sport will benefit by 2016. With the support of local authorities, children and young people are now able to enjoy PE classes and sport.

Making sport available to all children

International Inspiration is working in close collaboration with local governments to create sports opportunities available to all children. For example, in April 2009, the Municipality of Pesqueira, in the State of Pernambuco, made PE compulsory in schools. This meant that for the first time in their lives 5,500 children in 14 elementary schools had access to PE and school sport.

Case studies:

Bringing communities together

Thanks to International Inspiration, the rural municipality of Pedra now has its first professional PE teacher, Joao Batista Filho. As the local sports coordinator, Joao is working hard to bring opportunities to some of the municipality's most disadvantaged rural communities, where many young people have never had the chance to play sports like volleyball, basketball or handball.

By organizing sports festivals, Joao is determined to tackle some of the problems affecting young people in the region: including child labour, low aspirations and high drop-out rates from school.

Playing school sport for the first time

Charles Albuquerque, 28, from Igaci has found a new lease of life thanks to the International Inspiration programme. As a young person living with a disability and coming from a poor family, he originally thought his opportunities in life would be limited. However, thanks to the programme, Charles now works with around 800 children who had never played sports in school before, inspiring them to learn about new sports and making sure that they have the chance to try them out.

Charles said: 'My economic situation, nor my dyslexia or physical disability prevented me from becoming the professional I am today. On the contrary - the difficulties I faced in my life made me even more motivated and committed towards children's right to play sports. I am very proud to be part of the International Inspiration initiative.'

Palau

'The athletics series inspired by International Inspiration has given me the opportunity to do what I love – to run. I have gained so much confidence through the competition. As a result, I ran in the 2009 Palau Games and won a bronze medal in the 100m.' Ruby, age 13

Changing lives

Palau is a small island state in Micronesia. One of the first five countries to be chosen to be involved in International Inspiration, the programme has been supporting children and young people since 2007.

One of the aims of International Inspiration in Palau is to promote healthy lifestyles – obesity is an increasing health concern on the island. It is also working to improve PE for primary school pupils by training PE teachers and organising regular after-school sports competitions.

Reasons to celebrate

- Four featured sports – athletics, volleyball, basketball and softball – are now included in Palau's PE curriculum.
- Palau Community College is now a recognised training centre so Paluans no longer have to travel to train.

Case study: On the right track

One huge success story from this new initiative is 13-year-old Ruby. Before the athletics series, there was no training or opportunities for athletes in Palau's elementary schools so Ruby's talent remained unnoticed. Today, Ruby has become a role model at her school and she has represented her country at the 2010 Youth Olympic Games.

'The athletics series has given me the opportunity to do what I love – to run. I have gained so much confidence through the competition. As a result, I ran in the 2009 Palau Games and won a bronze medal in the 100 metres.'

Zambia

'Ever since I joined the International Inspiration project my life has changed. I can now teach and share my experience with my fellow peers. The project has boosted my self-esteem and confidence. Before the project, I could not stand in front of people to address them but now, I am even a role model to many youths.' Joseph, Zambia

Changing lives

International Inspiration is using sport to teach children about HIV and AIDS – crucial in a country where one in seven adults and more than one in 10 young women are living with HIV. It is also working with the Zambian Government to develop a develop high-quality PE lessons for three million Zambian children.

Reasons to celebrate

- HIV and AIDS awareness-raising projects have involved 1.5 million young people and adults.
- 900 peer leaders and 500 teachers and coaches have been trained to deliver messages about healthy living and HIV through sports activities.
- 18 radio clubs have been created to promote the benefits of PE and sport to a wider audience, and to share messages about HIV, malaria and drug abuse.

Turning on the radio

A sports-inspired radio campaign has inspired children to discuss sexual health. It has been a particularly successful way of getting the message out: poverty forces many children to drop out of school, but this programme has reached the wider community. Radio clubs, in which groups gather in local neighborhoods to listen together and discuss issues raised in broadcasts, are encouraging young people to absorb these messages and play it safe.

Case study:

Tackling problems in school

Kabulonga Boys High School is one of 11 schools that International Inspiration has linked with schools in the UK. Pupils are using sport to raise awareness about each other's cultures and to tackle numeracy and literacy learning.

Teachers at Kabulonga chose gifted young leaders to work in after-school sports activities with 40 children struggling to read and write. Young leaders also gave children with physical disabilities the chance to play sport. Sport has provided a valuable incentive to learning and teachers have noticed a marked improvement in pupils' maths and reading skills.

'International Inspiration has made me discover who I am. I was just one of those people who participated - but now I am able to plan and organise festivals.' Lorenzo, young leader, Kabulonga Boys High School.