

Sport for peace

A Social Transformation Tool

Methodological Guide

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Grupo Internacional de Paz

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Sport for peace. A Social Transformation Tool

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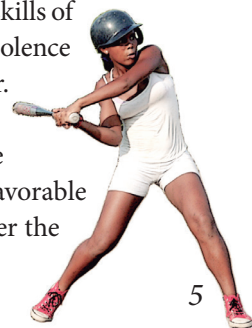


Presentation

This document provides guidance—from the perspective of the Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) sector—for various audiences interested in sport as a tool for social transformation. Part I aims to contribute to the understanding of the scope and opportunities posed by sport for the communities, in terms of developing individual and collective skills, positioning appropriate identification models, and meeting human needs, provided that they are always oriented towards the prevention of violence, the reconciliation, and the restoration of the social fabric of the territories affected by the armed conflict. Part I also addresses how, in social contexts with a history of conflict, community social sport goes beyond the idea of being a healthy leisure alternative to become a necessary mechanism for communities to develop skills that allow people—especially children and young people—to respond assertively to external threats and to build scenarios for community living that contribute to collective well-being and peace. Moreover, it suggests the need to bring intentionality into sports practice—since it is a means to achieve results in terms of development instead of an end itself—in what hereafter will be referred to as purpose-oriented sports practices. To broaden the understanding of the applicability of these concepts, the 7P strategy of Grupo Internacional de Paz (International Group for Peace) is illustrated.

Part II provides a methodological orientation, particularly useful for coaches from different social contexts who create sports spaces for the community, including a model for implementing the *Mi vida es un diamante* program. This program uses baseball as a tool to prevent children and young people from being recruited by illegal armed groups and criminal gangs. It proves the operationalization of the 7P strategy and provides concrete examples of how to carry out a peace- and development-oriented sports process in a regular training session.

This strategy was presented by Grupo Internacional de Paz (GIP), an organization committed to social transformation for peace-building in Colombia and other countries in Latin America. This group uses innovative mechanisms to strengthen the skills of individuals, communities, and the society and to break the cycle of armed violence and crime. Since 2010, sport has been one of its best allies in this endeavor. This organization works together with international organizations, the national government, territorial entities, the third sector, universities, the business sector, and the communities, in proposals that seek to have a favorable impact on the processes of peace consolidation within the territory, under the



perspectives of prevention, reconciliation, and restoration of affected communities. Its actions are characterized by their rigorous methodological content, oriented towards the development of individual and collective skills that allow responding assertively to the threats of the environments with a history of armed conflict and violence, which is translated into the 7P strategy and its programs.

This strategy incorporates the approach on guaranteeing and protecting children's rights promoted by UNICEF. Regarding the prevention of violence associated with the use of psychoactive substances, GIP has designed its contents based on the international guidelines of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). It also adheres to the principles on Restorative Justice promoted by UNODC, and its actions are in line with the national policy in Colombia for preventing the recruitment and use of children and adolescents by illegal armed groups and criminal gangs. As for the work with former combatants going through a reintegration process in Colombia, GIP is articulated with the national government through the Agency for Reintegration and Standardization (abbreviated ARN in Spanish). Finally, in the case of soccer, it works hand in hand with the Sport for Development Office of the German Technical Cooperation Agency (abbreviated GTZ in German), making the specific adaptations to each social context and integrating it into the 7P strategy.

In 2017, GIP was awarded the Beyond Sport Innovation through Sport Award in New York, in the category of Sport for Peace and Social Justice—one of the most important international awards in the Sport for Development sector. In 2016, it was shortlisted for this award in London, in the category of Sport for the Resolution of Social Conflicts. Its *Mi vida es un diamante* program was cited, as an example of how sport contributes to world peace, by the then Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki Moon, during the 2015 Extraordinary Assembly. Its *Camino al ring* program obtained the Golden Belt international recognition by the World Boxing Association at the 2017 World Boxing Convention, for its contribution to social transformation. In that same year, the Colombian government granted it recognition in the category of Spaces for Reconciliation, for its contribution to the peace process in the country, and it was selected during the UNESCO international call in Paris, which allowed publishing this guide.

This publication resulted from a joint effort with UNESCO, within the framework of the biennial participation program for 2016-2017, and has the support of the Colombian Presidential Agency of International Cooperation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Coldeportes. It is important to clarify that what is stated here does not necessarily represent the views of the aforementioned organizations and refers specifically to the Colombian social context, which may be adapted to countries with contexts of conflict and post-conflict.



FIRST PART

Sport for peace

Introduction

Throughout the Colombian territory, the dynamics of the conflict have affected the communities in all their dimensions, particularly destructing social bonds and ties, trust, integration, and respect for others. The cycle of violence has mainly affected children and adolescents, who for decades have been exposed to the risks of the social conflict that turned 12% of Colombia's population into its direct victims. Sons and daughters of parents immersed in the war as members of guerrilla, paramilitary, and military groups or victims of the actions of illegal armed groups are vulnerable to repeat cycles of violence if we do not implement social reintegration and restoration processes for re-establishing rights within the members of communities that have been affected by consecutive forms of violence over the years.

Security, which governments worry so much about, is only an indicator of a healthy society. Beyond the control mechanisms, in the subsoil of a city or in an unsafe rural territory, the unhealed wounds of a society are concealed and, along with them, new generations that inherit the consequences of the unresolved emotions of their parents and that lack the tools to respond assertively to the situations of their environment. This brings despair into their lives, as they see themselves without any practical means to change their life situation. Young people have been a “mine” for illegal armed groups and the main victims of recruitment by these actors. This risk is catalyzed if we take into account that adolescence is a stage characterized by the search for recognition and identification with a group. Circumstances become more complex if we consider the high positioning of negative leaderships—role models that children and young people seek to emulate—and the expansive phenomenon of social disintegration mediated by the violence that caused social and economic relations to be fragmented and the full development of individuals according to their wishes, interests, and determinations to be blocked. These cycles of violence produced an alteration in the cultural patterns of the communities affected, favoring the use of harmful means to achieve their purposes, thus affecting the lives of the inhabitants, their relationships, and the public spaces for their interactions.



Childhood and youth are developmental stages vitally important to establish points of reference that favor decision-making oriented towards a healthy life and, consequently, a more peaceful society. However, if these children and young people are immersed in an environment that only emits hostile signals, they will not find ways to channel their affective and spiritual needs towards the construction of a social being who understands that the collective well-being contributes to the individual well-being and that the latter is in favor of the first. Therefore, they will empathize with an individualistic society, where needs are met without considering the effects in themselves and in others, and look for pseudo-satisfiers that grant them an immediate and ephemeral pleasure, which will later have negative sequels in their well-being. “When the foundations for developing an identity are deficient, unsafe behaviors seeking immediate satisfaction or self-affirmation through ephemeral actions that give a feeling of achievement and recognition increase, even when it is negative in nature... Under these conditions, youth becomes vulnerable to obtaining rewards through indiscriminate behaviors—short-range, immediate, and accessible” (Krauskopf, 1994).

However, and although preventive strategies aimed at specific individuals or groups are particularly important, it is essential to generate community integration dynamics around actions that boost new points of reference and strengthen the protective environment for children and young people, so that they offer conditions for change and have a greater impact. From this angle, sport, in its social role, becomes a means through which spaces for healthy discussion, appropriate processing of conflicts, and visualization of opportunities to generate changes collectively are created and consolidated. If we talk about rebuilding a country, it is necessary to think about the transformation of cultural patterns within the community that favor community living, which is achieved in so far as practices promote new forms of interaction, through the adoption of principles that are traditionally addressed in sport and that find in it a playful way to incorporate them into everyday practices. Sport is thus seen as a privileged mechanism to educate a being at the service of new and constructive collective achievements.



Therefore, it is essential to identify the potential of the SDP movement in the pursuit of peace, so that the scope of the practices within the sector is not inferior. In the available literature, it is common to find a well-founded connection between sport and proper use of free time. The possibility offered by sport to occupy children's and young people's leisure time and use it to promote healthy habits is indisputable. Actions oriented towards this goal are generally justified by the need to protect this population, as it is believed that when they do not use their time properly, they are exposed to external risks. Without pretending to ignore the benefits of this type of actions, this approach is somewhat reductionist in societies affected by the armed conflict and finds limitations in the fact that violence is not an external element, but, on the contrary, it permeates the most basic forms of interaction, thus influencing from primary environments, such as family and school, to the most complex forms of organization.

In this regard, and considering that the growing SDP sector uses multiple approaches, the commitment to fully influence the rupture of intergenerational cycles of violence is becoming increasingly necessary in projects and programs that use sport as a means for social transformation. Since containing the problem is not enough, sport represents an opportunity to move towards the promotion of a new type of society, going from contention to action. This is particularly important in societies in transition or going through a post-conflict phase.

The relationship between sport and social capital gives us clues of how people in a community can develop abilities to cooperate among them based on mutual trust and the rules and networks sports practice may promote. For a society whose objective is to consolidate peaceful environments, sport may play an active role, as long as it serves potentially as a means to generate social capital in fragmented communities, in which it cannot be seen only as a bonding element among neighbors, but also as a bridge among outsiders¹. Reconciliation as a key element in the post-conflict phase is reinforced not only through the very sports practice, but also, in the sports environment, through the redefinition of spaces for community gatherings, the social networks favored in the immediate environment, and the incidence on the prevailing references and models of leadership in a community.

However, social capital—understood as what makes the cooperation among groups possible—must be supported by ethical principles that favor well-being settings in the community, in such a way that it does not allow practices generating new social ruptures. Certain social groups that unite to cooperate for a cause that not always is good (such as the case of illegal armed groups and drug trafficking gangs) boast of having values traditionally included in the sports discourse, such as discipline,

1 From Robert Putnam's point of view in *"Bowling alone. The collapse and revival of American Community"*.





teamwork, leadership, and solidarity; therefore, sport faces the challenge of impacting the roots and not only the flowers (appearance) of the tree. The possibility sport has to build social capital is an opportunity that must be channeled and purpose-oriented. This purpose is not granted by sport itself, although it offers a high impact opportunity.

Now, regarding the concept of values, it is crucial not to be mistaken, taking into account that sport may transcend a simplistic axiological thinking and lead us to more complex matters, such as motivations and paradigms (understood as archetypes or points of reference), on which individual and collective actions and decisions are based. Consequently, the question of how SDP may influence these decisions arises. The development of a critical thinking process is one of the main challenges that purpose-oriented sports practices have to face, inasmuch as it favors the denaturalization of daily practices and opens the conscious perspective of the own world, in which actions have a cause and a consequence in the personal life and the environment. Moreover, although it is true that human actions are mainly rational, there is some irrationality that we cannot ignore when promoting more peaceful societies. In this regard, sport may provide participants with elements to recognize emotions and to handle them properly, including in the practice conscious, regulated, and professionally oriented mechanisms. The development of these personal skills favors the assertive decision-making, even in hostile environments—as long as the practice intentionally favors the fulfilment of this social objective and as long

as such advantage is not attributed to the practice as an inherent characteristic. The efficacy of this practice will depend on a set of factors that must be considered, such as the methodology used, the profile and education of the coach, and the ability to adapt to the environment conditions.

The sports environment should be understood as the physical and symbolic space associated with sports, and not only as the execution of the physical activity (training or game), and may include the community sports venues, the tournaments and championships, the fans, among others. The sports environment may be used then by the purpose-oriented sports practice to reinforce the educational contents and extend its benefits to other community members. It is there where SDP constitutes an opportunity to develop not only personal skills but also community skills, both necessary to restore the social fabric in societies transitioning to peace. This type of spaces is highly affected in armed conflict contexts, since there is a rupture in social relationships, caused by the mistrust and miscommunication among the community members and the occupation of public spaces by illegal armed groups.

From this perspective and in the middle of a peace agreement, Colombia should bet on initiatives that are innovative but naturally accepted in the communities, such as those that use sport with a social approach, as a mechanism that contributes to the guarantee of



no repetition, inasmuch as they provide a structure in a structureless environment, favor the channeling of emotions that influence human actions, promote the use of institutionalized mechanisms of conflict resolution, and, in general, develop skills in children and adolescents to build a healthier future society. Reflecting on the potential scopes of sport is an invitation to transcend traditional approaches and reconsider the role of organizations and sports leaders in territories affected by armed confrontations and especially in territories that face the challenge of transitioning to peace. SDP's main challenges are to show the actual impacts of sport as a driving force for social transformation and to make that national and transnational governments prioritize sports in their agendas.



Guest expert's article:

Human needs, gangs and sport

by Diana Bonar²

(The following is an article by guest expert Diana Bonar, narrating her experience as collaborator of Fight For Peace and the initiative of this British-Brazilian organization that uses combat sports to prevent violence in adolescents.)



Rio de Janeiro's Maré favela is a flat area of slums divided into 17 different communities and controlled by drug rival factions. It is one of the city's most violence-affected favelas, and it is where I work with a team of 80 people. Usually, a friend who has a black and large car—for which I feared we were mistaken for the police—drives me there. As usual, we go into the Baixa do Sapateiro favela, and we cross the Gaza Strip, to get to our fort: Fight for peace. This was in 2015, and the favela was occu-

2 Coordinator of Training and Contents for Fight For Peace and Specialist in Transformation of Conflicts and Peace Studies. This paper was written with the support of Patrick Ascroft, researcher of Rio's favelas..

pied by the army. I vividly remember the young people with their camouflage uniforms and helmets, in formation and sitting in the back of the army trucks, with heavy rifles hanging from their shoulders. They were 25 or less, and when I saw them I felt sad because I knew they would not change anything.

On the next corner, only 500 meters away, there was another group of young people with guns and pistols, but these young people were wearing bermudas and flip-flops, and they were unafraid. I felt the same sadness I had some seconds ago. Both groups responded to a hierarchy and were rivals of an unfair war; each individual was a victim of a system that the more I know, the less sense it makes to me.

It was a calm day at work inside Fight For Peace; we left the offices and took the same route back. However, when we got to the dividing line between territories, the uniform boys aimed their guns at us, using the sights in their rifles to focus on their target. We looked back and saw the bermudas boys getting nervous. We were in the middle of the battle field. I felt a cold sweat, my heart sped up, and my mouth dried. We could not do anything and we did not know how to react. The dead-end street lasted some seconds, but it was enough to have a good idea of how people who live in Maré should feel.

I work in the international organization Fight For Peace (FFP) since 2013, coordinating the expansion of their methodology of violence prevention in different parts of Brazil. Besides Brazil, the five-pillar methodology has been replicated in 25 different countries, obtaining a similar noticeable impact on all the territories, regardless of the significant differences in the cultural and social contexts and the manifestations of violence.

The following are some of the reasons why the methodology works: (1) The methodology is based on human needs. (2) The use of boxing and martial arts. (3) The slogan “champions in life, champions in the ring.” (4) The coach-mentor.

When I say “human needs” I mean something very important and valuable that humans share, something significant for each person in the world, needs we should satisfy to experience human dignity. For instance, we all seek to satisfy our needs of belonging, an identity, a house, security, and affection. They are profoundly rooted to the human nature and we will try to satisfy them consciously or unconsciously. They are so alive in our inner self that, according to Marshall Rosenberg, “violence may be considered as the tragic expression of an unmet need.” It means that there are several ways we can choose to satisfy these needs, and when a group is constantly oppressed and is prevented from expressing its identity, it is possible that it tries to use violence as the last resource.

If children come from a middle class family, from a supportive family that invests in their well-being, they are likely to have a wide range of resources to develop a healthy strategy to satisfy their needs. On the contrary, children from poor neighborhoods, surrounded by crime and violence, with little amusement options and poor-quality education, and forced to live in survival mode, will have different



resources. This background also affects the available strategies. In a poor neighborhood, where members of a gang meet to sell drugs, use heavy weapons, and earn large amounts of money, everything looks powerful and cool. These people have certain status, and are seen and respected by others. If you are that child who lacks direction and a purpose in life, a gang may be the perfect response to satisfy your needs. When you join a gang, you have a purpose, build your identity, belong to a group, feel safe, and have fun. What FFP does is to work in violent communities to offer the space and activities that satisfy those needs, so that young people become aware that violence is not their only option. The methodology can be adapted to the contexts and local cultures, precisely because those needs are shared by all humans, regardless of where in the world they are.

In an armed violence context, it is very common that young people want to learn to defend themselves. Roberto, Brazil's current champion, joined FFP because he wanted to revenge his father's death, and it was boxing what initially attracted him to the organization. However, the warm-hearted people he found there made him stay, as well as the human development component of the activities that contributed to his transformation, and the essential figure of the coach-mentor that did not allow them to give up. Everywhere I have been to in Brazil, I have heard stories such as that of Roberto, and I have been witness of the changes made through participation in combat sports, which serve as a hook, engaging young people with a language and energy they understand.

All the skills we learn in sports can be transferred to other life fields. A small percentage of people make a living through sports; therefore, FFP celebrates achievements outside the ring as much as inside the ring. We are proud of Carlos, who resumed his studies after 15 years outside the educational system, and after seven years of dedication, he finished school, went to college, and, today, is a teacher in FFP; as well as we are proud of Raissa, who is only 19 and already opened her own mini-judo school.

FFP is aware that the combat sports coach is much more than someone who merely teaches the techniques of a sport. FFP understands that the coach must also be a teacher of values, someone who celebrates victories, a support for difficult moments, a friend, and a role model. There are thousands of sports trainers worldwide who could transform hundred thousands of lives by taking on the role of mentors of their pupils. That is why we train our trainers; so that they can build a learning environment in their own country to encourage creativity, respect, conflict resolution skills, and other qualities in people.

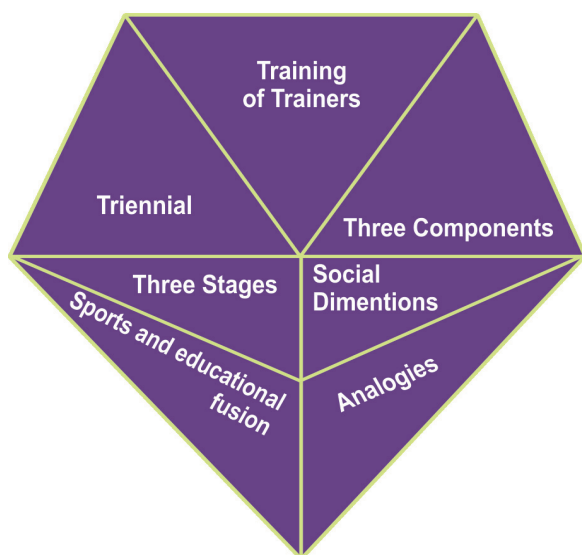
For four years, I have lived, witnessed, provided and fought through this transformation and this peace-building path. I already knew sport could give hope to individuals and communities, but I learnt that when sport is offered as part of a wider and more human strategy, it has a huge potential for social transformation.”



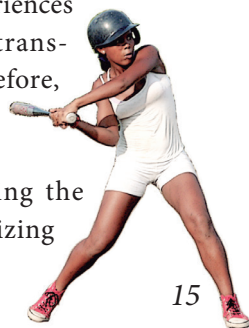
7P Strategy

The difficulties of a country affected historically by the armed conflict and how sport may be a transformation tool that contributes to the reconstruction of a society were addressed above. In this way, the 7P strategy emerges and takes as a starting point GIP's experience and the methodologies developed jointly with its allies to promote peace-building and social crime-prevention processes. Thanks to the sports leaders' training and support in the use of sport as a means to social transformation and peace-building, they are in front of this strategy in their communities, offering initiatives oriented to young people and using different disciplines. This strategy's purpose is the transformation of imaginaries and behaviors associated with illegality and violence, the reconciliation, and the recovery of physical spaces for community living. In this regard, sport, as a universal language, can be a powerful tool to develop skills in new generations and their communities, find a functional acknowledgement, and place new imaginaries that favor community living, as long as it is used as a purpose-oriented means and not as a mere end.

7P STRATEGY



This strategy is not exclusively designed for professionals of the social area or professional coaches; it is also directed to community coaches who, although in many cases have the bases for the technical and tactical teaching of sports, do not have the desired skills to turn these spaces into reflective, educational experiences towards social transformation. Therefore, the emphasis is placed on the relevance of training the trainers, recognizing



their potential as replicators and agents of change in their respective communities. The strategy also focuses on sustainability and the development of skills in people and communities, and seeks to fulfill its purpose based on seven pillars (four methodological and three operational) developed in cycles of three years and present, partially or entirely, in each program.

These pillars are described below:

1. Training of sports leaders:

Given that the objective of the 7P strategy is to develop skills in the communities so that they can manage their own peace-building processes and prevent the violence associated with the armed conflict, it is necessary to provide sports leaders, men and women, with the tools for the development of community and sports and educational activities. To do so, sport has to be seen as an element of the analogical reasoning, so the symbols of the playing field are transferred to everyday life in order to activate social indicators that allow participants and their communities to acquire tools to make decisions in favor of the collective well-being, establish community networks, resolve conflicts peacefully, increase the capacity for forgiveness, position appropriate identification models, and recognize and appreciate others in their diversity.



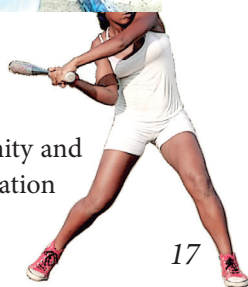
2. Three operational components:

- a) **Sports and educational fusion activities:** Training is an experiential learning space, where the sports venue becomes a laboratory of preparation for participants to develop individual and collective skills for building peace in their community. This is achieved through stimulation of the analogical reasoning, applying the sport's system of symbols to everyday life.

This component, just like the others, follows the experiential learning methodology; therefore, classes are not taught in a classroom and all the contents are addressed in the sports environment before, during, and after training. For the development of the three stages, the sports leader uses a guide or card (shown in detail in the second part of this text) selected among a set of activities provided within a toolkit.



- b) **Improvement and redefinition of spaces:** The public space (the area close to the playing field), as an element that denotes risk in some territories with these characteristics, is transformed by the community and becomes a safe space, suitable for community living. This transformation



is carried out through *mingas*, which are massive activities where people, after identifying the threatening conditions for community living, take measures to improve the physical, environmental, and social conditions and restore the use for which the space was created and, this way, contribute to the collective well-being. This activity is conducted by the sports leader and the participants, and counts on the collaboration of the whole community. In many cases, the activity consists of adapting a space to make training sessions viable, what develops a sense of belonging in the participants and the community and mitigates environmental risks in the setting.



- c) **Strengthening of the protective environment:** Through experiential meetings, fathers, mothers, leaders, teachers, and other members of the community get together over a common situation or difficulty related to the legacy of the armed conflict, in order to seek different solutions. The construction of the social cartography is carried out during the first experiential meeting with the community (and the participation of the sports leader), which supports the identification of spaces of risk and helps to find conflictive or stressful elements that may appear in the community. Additionally, *social dimensions* are addressed during the meetings through a ludic or experiential exercise, so that they become principles applicable to the solution of the problem in question.



3. Sport and education fusion:

Sports trainings are the educational spaces aimed at children and adolescents. It is not necessary to complement them with additional workshops or other training activities, since, through experiential learning, all the contents needed for addressing indicators are developed by means of six *dimensions* detailed below.

4. Three stages in sports and educational activities:

In these three stages, the technical and sports aspects are merged with the educational ones. The session opens with an inconclusive “stimulus” (case, story, image, etc.) related to the social dimensions mentioned below in this text, and then moves on to the central sports activity (training). Once completed, there is a feedback space, where participants must go back to the initial stimulus and complete it with the elements seen in the central sports activity. The sports leader, after listening to them, makes contributions and comments and, finally, assigns a challenge or task that is discussed during the sports sessions of the following week.





5. Analogies:

El método analógico es una herramienta fundamental para trabajar las dimensiones de una manera vivencial y de fácil asociación con la cotidianidad, que crean un puente entre las dinámicas del juego y la vida personal y de comunidad del deportista. Se emplea tanto para las actividades deportivas como para las comunitarias.

6. Dimensions:

All the contents addressed in the strategies incorporate the following dimensions: Critical thinking, collective well-being, creative thinking, emotional education, assertive communication, and empathy.

- a) **Critical thinking:** It is the ability to question, reconsider, and analyze an information, situation, or existing experience in the most objective way possible, aiming at reaching conclusions about reality (WHO, 1993). Critical thinking is then linked to the ability to reason and reflect on what to do and believe, seeking to review, question, and evaluate reality (based on evidence, reasons, and assumptions) in order to contribute to its active transformation (López, 2012). For GIP, it implies questioning oneself about different aspects of reality and justice, analyzing carefully the position that one wants to assume, being aware of their active role in the peace-building process in their community, and being consequent with the

objectives set by the organization. It is about denaturalizing what is culturally naturalized and learned without an own judgment.

- b) **Collective well-being:** According to Barragan (1991), this concept is related to the social principles that seek cooperation and the satisfaction of common needs, having the ability to discern clearly in order to guide all individual actions towards the improvement of collective conditions. For his part, Moix (1986) stated that collective well-being implies a connection with social reality and, at the same time, aims at creating awareness about the responsibility and influence of every community member on the generation of a shared social order, whose goal is to make available, to all the society members, the necessary means to satisfy those demands commonly accepted as needs. For GIP, collective well-being implies placing the common good above the individual, leaving aside individual interests, respecting and tolerating the other with their particularities, and working as part of a whole called community. GIP seeks to develop in its participants community skills that foster social commitment and co-responsibility in the peace-building process.
- c) **Creative thinking:** According to the WHO (1993), cited in Mantilla (2007), it is the ability to find different alternatives, in an original way, helping to make right decisions, anticipating situations, and producing ideas in order to restructure what is already known. Creative thinking contributes to the adequate solution of problems, since it allows individuals to see reality from different perspectives and explore the available alternatives in an adaptive and flexible manner, while questioning the actions already carried out. In GIP, it is understood as the ability to generate different alternatives to adequately deal with risks, threats, and situations that may arise in the environment, making use of the personal, social, and environmental resources available. GIP wants its participants to take advantage, in a recursive way, of the personal and social elements at their disposal to solve situations that affect harmony in the community.
- d) **Emotional education:** It is the ability to recognize one's own and others' emotions and feelings, becoming aware of how they influence individual behavior and collective well-being and learning to manage emotions such as anger, aggression, fear, sadness, etc. (WHO, 1993). According to Bisquerra (2000), emotional education is a continuous and permanent process that seeks a comprehensive development of the human being, in order to train them for life and, consequently, increase personal and social well-being. Some of the objectives of emotional education, according to Bisquerra (2016), are: to gain a better knowledge of one's own emotions, identify the emotions of others, develop the ability to control one's own emotions, develop the ability to create positive emotions, adopt a positive attitude towards life. Emotional education helps to identify, recognize, and accept one's own and others' emotions, allowing the individual to express them in a healthy and appropriate manner, in order to strengthen self-confidence and confidence in others, while increasing personal and





social well-being. GIP knows that a vital element to build peace is the appropriate management of emotions, but is also aware of the effort and discipline that this implies and that is why, through its programs, it aims at finding healthy ways to express them, instead of repressing them.

- e) **CAssertive communication:** According to Riso (1988), it is that behavior that makes it possible to appropriately express (without cognitive distortions or anxiety and properly combining verbal and non-verbal components in the most effective way possible) ideas or feelings of opposition (to say no, show disagreement, make and receive criticisms, defend rights, and, generally, express negative feelings) and affection (to pay and receive compliments, express positive feelings in general), considering one's own interests and objectives and respecting the others' right to assert themselves. GIP understands it as the ability to clearly and respectfully express ideas, opinions, or feelings, accepting the differences that may be perceived in the other and bearing in mind that the other is a different being. Likewise, it is necessary to consider the elements that take part in communication (context, body and verbal language, etc.). GIP tries to provide the tools necessary to turn communication into a useful strategy for conflict resolution and social organization, in order to achieve goals that benefit the entire community.



- f) Empathy: According to the WHO (1993), cited in Mantilla (2007), it is the ability to put oneself in others' place. This ability helps to better understand others and, therefore, to react according to their needs and circumstances. For his part, Hoffman (1987) states that empathy is an emotional reaction that is compassionate and congruent with the emotional state of others, which should be understood considering its relationship with three main concepts: The adoption of perspective (which refers to the tendency to adopt the point of view of others); affection (understood as the tendency to be concerned or feel interest for others) and, finally, personal discomfort (which refers to the tendency to feel uneasy or uncomfortable in tense interpersonal spaces that involve others and their needs). For GIP, it is an attempt to understand the world in the way that others conceive it. It is being aware that others live a different situation; that they think, feel, and act differently. It is understanding that difference should not be a segregating factor, but an element that allows identification with others and their reality, thus generating a positive bond. GIP seeks that participants develop the ability to put themselves in the others' place, in order to improve community living both inside and outside the playing field.



7. *Three-year cycle:*

The process is planned on a progressive scale of three years. During the first year, emphasis is placed on the theoretical and practical training for sports leaders and the strengthening of the sports and educational processes conducted in their territories, with regular guidance by professionals from the social areas who visit the territory to reinforce the implementation of the methodology in training and community activities with a focus on peace. The second year focuses on the guidance to develop the strategy, as well as on the training process that sports leaders have to carry out with one or more participants, so that they assume the role of monitors during the methodological development of both sports and community activities. During this year, the leaders and their communities start to design their own activities with greater autonomy and to manage internal resources within their territories for the implementation of these activities. The objective of the third year is the consolidation of the strategy, focused on the establishment of community networks, the positioning of sports monitors as new leaders in the territory, and the evaluation and adjustment of the development.

Now, how is the 7P Strategy implemented in a sport practice? This is the subject addressed in the second part of this text, which will be based on the discipline of baseball in the *Mi vida es un diamante* program, to exemplify it.





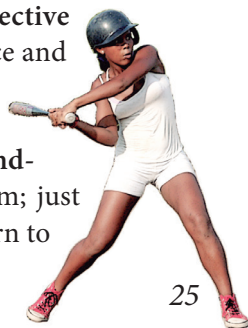
SECOND PART

Mi Vida es un Diamante Program

*"Just like in the field
I make the best plays,
I do so too in my personal field and
in the field of life"*
C.R.

The *Mi vida es un diamante* (*My life is a diamond* in English and abbreviated MVD in Spanish) program is part of the 7P strategy that—built on 7 pillars (operational and methodological)—constitutes the basis for the construction of a process for training and supporting baseball sports leaders, their team members (children, adolescents), and the community. The program strengthens and develops the community's skills in pursuit of community living and social transformation in the territories in a three-year cycle, which allows them gradually to become more independent.

Moreover, the six social dimensions are addressed, which have the power to boost the necessary skills in the participants, so that they learn how to face, in an assertive manner, situations in the community that may affect the overall well-being. In that sense, just like good baseball players develop **critical thinking** to learn to anticipate a play, participants also learn to foresee a "play in life" by reflecting on the consequences their actions or decisions may cause. As for **collective well-being**, they learn to recognize the importance of the group force and the community as a team, creating a space where the best hits can also be scored and where not only a few, but everyone benefits from them. This, in turn, helps participants develop **empathetic understanding** because they are able to feel what others feel and support them; just like shortstops cover second and third base in the field, they also learn to



take on the shortstop role in the field of life. In addition, **assertive communication** among participants is crucial, using a language—such as that sign language during the game—that allows them to give appropriate answers to inappropriate proposals.

That is how good baseball players propose ideas and solutions to situations in both the diamond field and the field of life, where they become proactive and use their creative thinking to solve different issues with the resources available in the community. This **creative thinking**, in turn, helps participants develop an *emotional education*, which allows them to consider and create different communication alternatives at this level, by learning to recognize their right to feel and their right to express feelings, without causing harm with bad pitches of what they feel, but learning how to swing and build a connection with the different emotions, in order to score runs for forgiveness, reconciliation and community living.

As it can be observed, analogical language allows us to juxtapose the elements of the baseball field to the field of life, turning life into a baseball game where fair play is always on. The very name of the program—My life is a diamond—is an analogy itself because it compares life with a diamond, not only as a gemstone, but also as the shape of the baseball field.

In this regard, every player has several diamonds where they play the game of life (personal diamond, family diamond, school diamond, sports diamond, community diamond, and so forth) and just like in the sports diamond, where they train con-

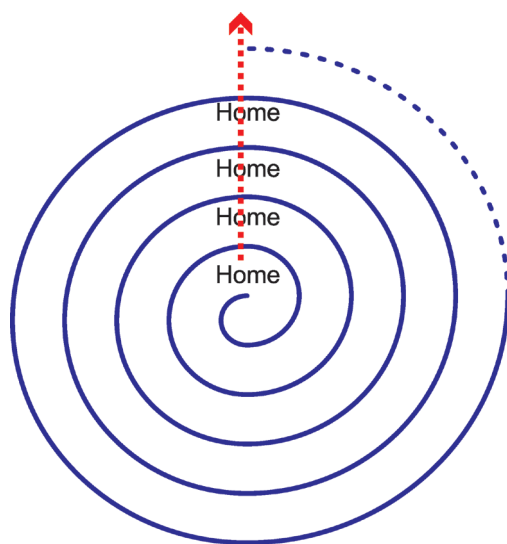


stantly to have a better performance, the other diamonds also require a constant training to achieve a better personal, family and community performance, thus avoiding inappropriate actions such as illegal behaviors, which are “plays” that prevent scoring runs in the game of life.

Therefore, baseball becomes the *sine qua non* tool to carry out this 7P strategy, where this sport is combined with educational elements, thus enriching each meeting and expecting it to transcend the field. At the same time, this strategy engages the community in activities that encourage the use of public venues to give new meanings to realities and to reflect on how to experience the spaces and establish their community value, thus transforming them into a symbolic field where the best hits for the community can be scored.

This is how the 7P strategy, through its different pillars, operates the MVD program, helping community members to develop critical thinking when addressing community issues and increasing their spectrum of possibilities in the community members.

As a social transformation tool, baseball helps us walk towards that purpose if we know how to take advantage of its contents and scope.

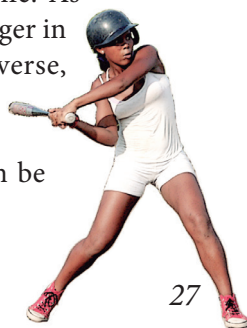


*“After the end, everything starts again”
(Serginaz).*

The different symbols of this sport (positions, plays, elements, rules, game situations, etc.) can be associated with the participant’s personal life (their everyday reality, their family’s reality, their community’s reality, etc.), thus extracting their potential and using it for good citizen relationships and good community living practices.

Given the great amount of symbolic contents found in this sport, it is possible to create isomorphic constructions, establishing parallelisms between situations that have similar structures, such as the (diamond) field and the field of life. As Cassirer states, “No longer in a merely physical universe,

man lives in a symbolic universe, and symbols play a very important role in our lives. Since the day we are born until the day we die, we are surrounded by symbols.” In that way, baseball is a tool that can be applied to everyday life.





The sports diamond, that is, the baseball field and all its dynamics, presents a snapshot of existence; and, by using analogies, it is possible to make these connections. Such diamond can be conceived as a fractal structure (a replica of the whole), as the whole and its parts are similar to life (to scale); this brings us closer to a more comprehensive understanding of reality. It is a spiral game in which the starting point is the goal itself. In baseball, these two ends are the home plate, and each “run scored” demands a new beginning, an eternal return, just like in the very existence, “the field of life,” which is also a spiral journey with an endless interpretation. This spiral, as a way of growth expressed when “scoring a run” over and over again, leads to new levels, new increasingly complex realities as you go from base to base, without wearing out its meaning. When unraveling the baseball field beyond its apparent landscape, we find an interconnection of elements that allows us to study reality; we see an entire non-linear dynamic system made up of cycles which, in turn, are part of more complex cycles.

Each run scored draws circular circuits, that is, circuits that start and end in themselves as a loop system, a circular process similar to the processes of life in which you start from a balance state, a state A—home plate in baseball—that breaks and that will soon attempt to re-balance itself (by returning to the starting point, the original balance: going back to state A).

As mentioned above, each time players score a run, another one follows in a constant spiral. However, in the “baseball of life,” players are those who decide whether such

spiral movement leads them upwards or downwards, depending on their decisions. For instance, they may run from base to base but “scoring runs” downwards with illegal behaviors.

Baseball is a sport that has no clock and is played counterclockwise, just like chaos theory puts it when stating that the world does not follow strictly the clock model, which is foreseeable and fixed. The game involves an order but, at the same time, it is unpredictable because nothing is resolved until the last out; therefore, it relates inherently to life, and much can be created from it.

In fact, baseball is a symbol itself, and symbols, whose role is to unite, represent us. The “king of sports,” as the scientist Albert Einstein called it (upon noticing its complexity and extent), can be conceived as the intersection where the game field meets the field of life. It is the element connected to reality and from which lessons can be constantly learnt because of its never ending nature; these lessons are not only verbal, but also practical.



Methodological aspects

In the MVD program methodology, we see participants as more than competitive beings and we understand them in a comprehensive manner, not only as home-run scoring machines or machines programmed to score hits. The methodology's purpose is for participants to build meanings. Therefore, during the different sessions, we foster participation and creation based on the learning-by-doing, learning-by-playing and learning-by-feeling concepts, preventing those sessions from becoming spaces to "accumulate information." Instead we want these spaces to allow participants to develop their potentials, thus increasing the probability that such learning, which would be useful and applicable, extends to different areas giving value to their lives.

Consequently, we design approaches to be implemented in the field and in the community, which create critical thought processes and participation based on isomorphic constructions, ludic and educational techniques, casuistry and activities applicable to the participants' everyday life. During these group construction spaces, different aspects permeate, interrelating reason, emotion, action and context. Additionally, the indicators that were established previously in the program logical framework matrix are also promoted through the social dimensions mentioned earlier.

Using baseball with the appropriate support and guidance allows the different skills developed during the process to be channeled properly by applying them in the construction of community living. Thus, baseball becomes a means for social transformation.

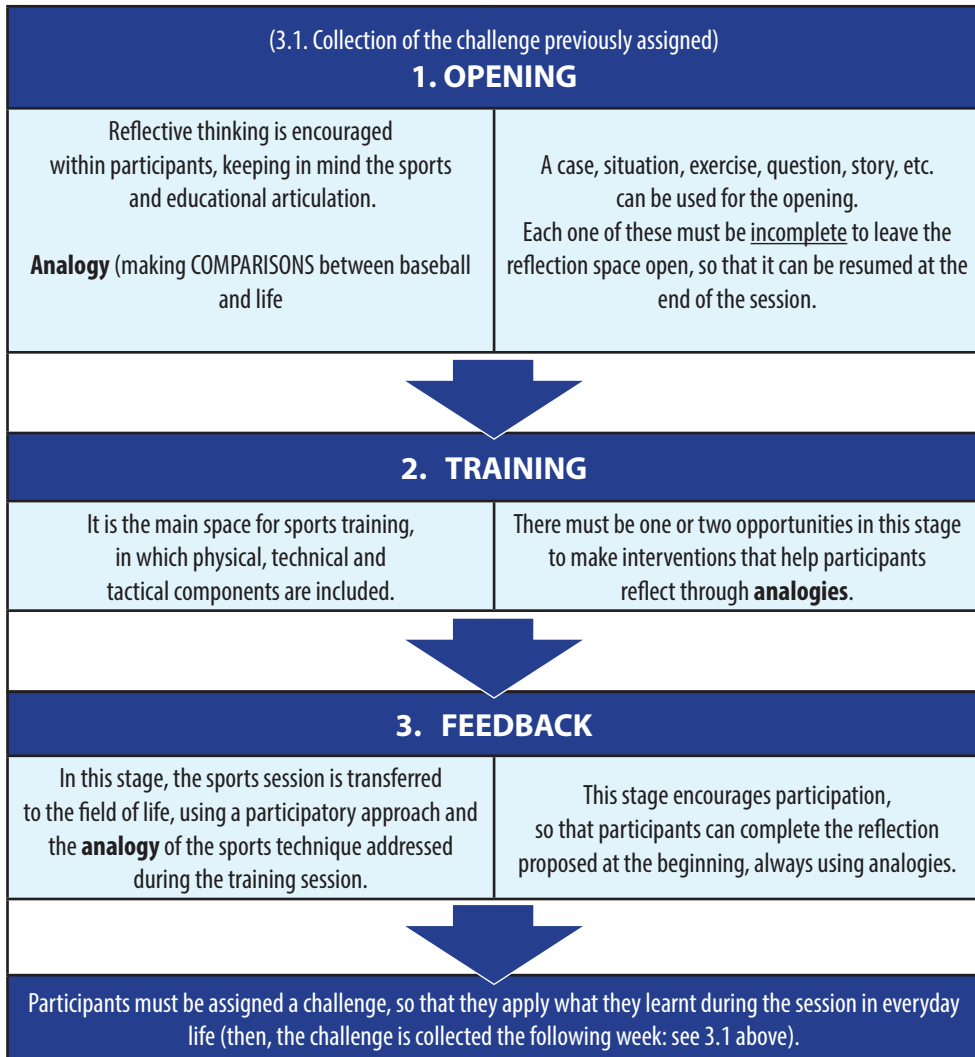




Plays beyond the field

The methodology is implemented in the sports and educational activities, as well as in the community. Regarding the sports and educational sessions, three stages are included, where the sports leader invites the participants to create, build, and become active agents of their own transformation, as outlined below:

1. OPENING	2. TRAINING	3. FEEDBACK
It aims at generating a motivational spirit within participants that boosts their thoughtful, questioning, analytical and intrapersonal communication skills. The session begins by picking up a challenge previously assigned.	This stage seeks to identify key situations or moments of the sports sessions that can be transferred, compared, or extended to community realities.	This is the collection stage when critical thinking is encouraged in order to connect the elements provided in the opening stage with the elements of the activity developed. Construction of meanings, interpersonal communication and analogical thinking within participants are fostered during this stage. A challenge to be applied in the "community baseball" is assigned.

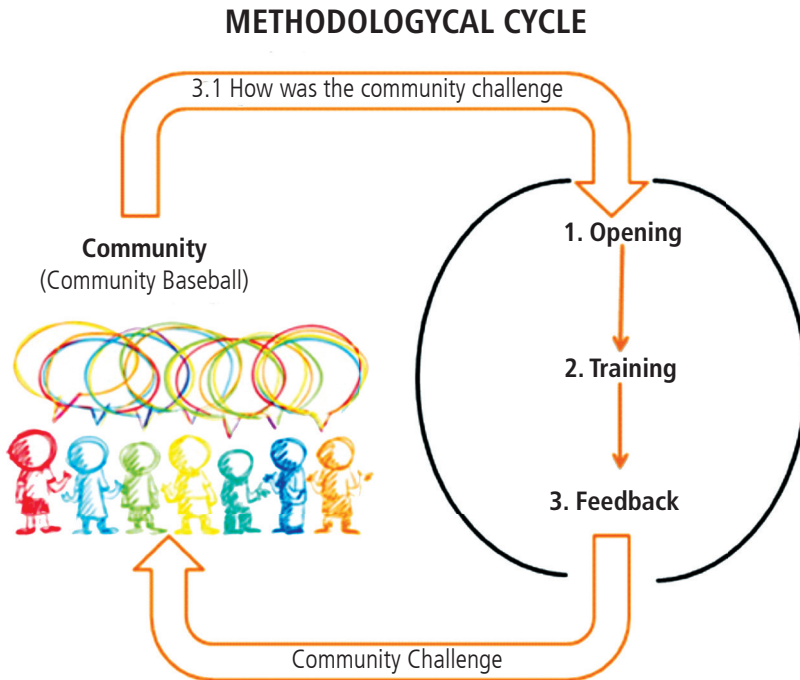


As shown in the chart, the sports component is merged with the educational component in each session. Although the sport—baseball in this case—is the means used to summon and approach the participants and the community, the end purpose is for participants to develop social skills that allow them to face assertively situations encountered in their environment. Furthermore, it is expected that they develop, through the sports and educational approach, a critical view point of their reality and a sense of solidarity with their community and that they strengthen their creativity to solve personal, family and community issues.

Given that sport alone does not guarantee that participants develop social skills, it is then necessary to complement the sports practice with support and guidance in

order to generate positive impacts both in the lives of participants and in their immediate environments. It is therefore an experiential learning practice through baseball, where the qualities of participants are boosted so that they can begin to lead social transformation and peace-building processes.

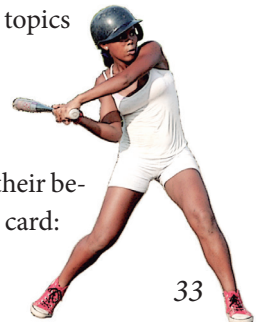
The following figure shows the three stages explained above, corresponding to the pillar with the same name: “Three-Stage Pillar.”



Structure of a card:

As a fundamental tool of the sports and educational sessions, cards are a strategy aimed at impacting participants in a visual, auditory and practical way. By using this card, the sports leader opens the sports and educational meet or resumes it in order to give feedback once the meet ends. These cards are integrated into a “toolbox”: a device consisting of a handbook and a set of systematically organized cards containing the topics to be addressed in each session.

With the implementation of these cards, we seek to address the different social dimensions mentioned above, through cases, exercises, questions, phrases, images and other stimuli that encourage participants to reflect on their behavior and various common situations in their environment. Example of a card:



HOW DO WE AIM AT THE STRIKE ZONE IN THE FIELD OF LIFE?



20



**WHAT SHOULD BE DONE TO AIM THE STRIKE
ZONE IN THE FIELD OF LIFE?**



Conduct your sports activities and take 1 or 2 opportunities to invite participants to compare what happens in training and in real life.



An inappropriate action does NOT fall within the strike zone, but outside, and becomes a bad ball. All your actions should aim at strike zone or our community: we must play fairly aiming for forgiveness, sowing tolerance instead of violence.

And for you, where is the strike zone in the game of your life?

20



Assertive Communication
Critical Thinking

The card consists of two sides. The first side is the one that the sports leader shows participants at the start of the meet, while the second side contains three strips that represent each of the three stages of the sports and educational fusion. One different card is used every week and it has to be designed in good time, taking into account both the sports subject and the social dimension to be addressed, so

that the approaches are connected from beginning to end, articulating sports and educational components. For instance, if the “creative thinking” dimension is going to be addressed in a certain week, then the sports subject should be connected or articulated with that dimension.

The dimension or dimensions addressed in each card can be found at the lower right corner (second side) of each card. The main dimension is highlighted with a yellow star, while the other dimensions (if any) appear below it. These secondary dimensions can be addressed in other training sessions (but using the same card, when the leader so decides it, according to the educational needs of the group).

All the cards are numbered (the sample card is the number 20.) This does not mean that they have to be used in a sequential order, but it is the sports leader who determines the order according to the needs and characteristics of the context, and having planned the activities in advance.

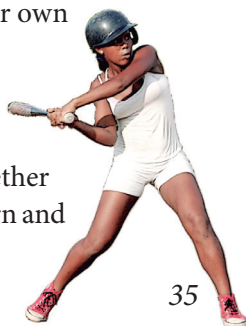
Sports leaders have access to 73 cards that allow them to conduct their training with a social sense, stimulating in participants the reflection, the analysis and the ability to establish analogies by comparing what happens in the sports scene and the real life.

Working with the images on the cards:

The use of the cards as an educational tool is of great importance within the sports and educational processes, since it helps to understand and offers and reinforces information. Images always communicate something; every image involves and implies a specific message and there is where transmission of different ideas, values and feelings takes place. Moreover, images remain in the minds of participants, who, as part of their perceptive processes, retain and complete images or scenes, apparently incomplete, such as those offered beyond the field, that is, in the field of life.

Visual information is the most consumed type of information in the Western world (Acaso, 2006, p.14). It is an element with which participants of the program connect, enabling them to feel comfortable and thus diminishing their psychological defenses against the stimulus, what potentiates its effect. In addition, images have power; they can move people and provide information, as intended with the use of the cards: encourage participants out of their comfort zone and confront them with their daily lives, so that they become the main characters of their own processes.

The card enables participants to play an active role since they not only listen to the instructions of the sports leader, but give their own meaning to the image, interact with their teammates, and analyze together the different perceptions of the image, which arouse their interest to learn and



to take the initiative, hence contributing to enriching diverse aspects of participants' emotional activity. As stated by Abramowski (2008), there is no single meaning for an image; it rather renews its powers and senses and is completed in the eyes of each new spectator. An image is something more than a simple iconic representation: it is a social practice based on that representation, but not limited to it. Moreover, it implies a social operation or work, either through the individual or the collective imagination (Dussel, Abramowski, Igarzábal, Laguzzi, 2010, p.6).

A table summarizing the relationship of each card with the dimension(s) addressed and its corresponding indicator(s) is shown below:

Card No.	Main Dimension	Secondary Dimension(s)	Indicator(s) (for measurement purposes)
1	Collective well-being		Establishment of community networks
2	Collective well-being		Establishment of community networks
3	Collective well-being		Establishment of community networks
4	Collective well-being		Establishment of community networks
5	Collective well-being		Establishment of community networks
6	Collective well-being		Establishment of community networks
7	Collective well-being	Creative thinking	E. community networks - Decision m. Forgiveness – Conflict resolution
8	Collective well-being	Creative thinking	E. community networks - Decision m. Forgiveness – Conflict resolution
9	Collective well-being	Empathy	E. community networks – Appreciation of diversity – Forgiveness
10	Collective well-being		Establecimiento de redes comunitarias
11	Collective well-being	Creative thinking Critical thinking	E. community networks - Decision making – Forgiveness – Conflict resolution – Appropriate id. models
12	Collective well-being	Creative thinking	E. community networks - Decision m. Forgiveness – Conflict resolution
13	Collective well-being	Creative thinking	E. community networks - Decision m. Forgiveness – Conflict resolution
14	Assertive communication		Conflict resolution – Appropriate identification models
15	Assertive communication		Conflict resolution – Appropriate identification models

Card No.	Main Dimension	Secondary Dimension(s)	Indicator(s) (for measurement purposes)
16	Assertive communication		Conflict resolution – Appropriate identification models
17	Assertive communication		Conflict resolution – Appropriate identification models
18	Assertive communication		Conflict resolution – Appropriate identification models
19	Assertive communication		Conflict resolution
20	Assertive communication		Conflict resolution – Appropriate identification models
21	Emotional education	Collective well-being	Forgiveness – Conflict resolution Establishment of community networks
22	Emotional education		Forgiveness – Conflict resolution
23	Emotional education	Critical thinking	Forgiveness – Conflict r. – Decision m. – Appropriate identification models
24	Emotional education	Creative thinking	Forgiveness – Conflict resolution Decision making
25	Emotional education	Critical thinking	Forgiveness – Conflict r. – Decision m. – Appropriate identification models
26	Emotional education	Creative thinking	Forgiveness – Conflict resolution – Decision making
27	Emotional education		Forgiveness – Conflict resolution
28	Emotional education		Forgiveness – Conflict resolution
29	Emotional education		Forgiveness – Conflict resolution
30	Emotional education	Creative thinking	Forgiveness – Conflict resolution – Decision making
31	Emotional education	Critical thinking	Forgiveness – Conflict resolution – Decision making – Appropriate identification models
32	Emotional education	Empathy Critical thinking	Forgiveness – Conflict resolution – Appreciation of diversity - Decision making – E. community networks – Appropriate identification models
33	Emotional education		Forgiveness – Conflict resolution
34	Empathy		Forgiveness - E. community networks – Appreciation of diversity
35	Empathy		Forgiveness - E. community networks – Appreciation of diversity

Card No.	Main Dimension	Secondary Dimension(s)	Indicator(s) (for measurement purposes)
36	Empathy		Forgiveness - E. community networks – Appreciation of diversity
37	Empathy	Emotional education Critical thinking	Forgiveness – E. community networks – A. diversity - Conflict resolution – Decision making – Appropriate identification models
38	Empathy	Emotional education	Forgiveness - E. community networks - A. diversity – Conflict r.
39	Empathy	Creative thinking Critical thinking	Forgiveness - E. community networks - A. diversity - Decision making – Conflict resolution – Appropriate identification models
40	Empathy	Emotional education Creative thinking	Forgiveness-E. community networks – Appreciation of diversity - Decision making – Conflict resolution
41	Empathy	Collective well-being	Forgiveness - E. community networks – Appreciation of diversity
42	Empathy	Collective well-being	Forgiveness - E. community networks – Appreciation of diversity
43	Empathy	Creative thinking	Forgiveness-E. community networks – Appreciation of diversity - Decision making – Conflict resolution
44	Empathy	Collective well-being	Forgiveness - E. community networks – Appreciation of diversity
45	Empathy		Forgiveness - E. community networks – Appreciation of diversity
46	Empathy		Forgiveness - E. community networks – Appreciation of diversity
47	Empathy		Forgiveness - E. community networks – Appreciation of diversity
48	Creative thinking	Collective well-being	Decision m. – Forgiveness – Conflict r. - E. community networks
49	Creative thinking	Collective well-being	Decision m. – Forgiveness – Conflict r. E. community networks
50	Creative thinking	Collective well-being	Decision m. – Forgiveness – Conflict r. E. community networks
51	Creative thinking	Critical thinking	Decision m. – Forgiveness – Conflict r. – Appropriate identification models
52	Creative thinking		T. decisiones – Perdón – R. conflictos
53	Creative thinking	Collective well-being	Decision m. – Forgiveness – Conflict r. E. community networks

Card No.	Main Dimension	Secondary Dimension(s)	Indicator(s) (for measurement purposes)
54	Creative thinking	Critical thinking	Decision m. – Forgiveness – Conflict r. – Appropriate identification models
55	Creative thinking	Collective well-being	Decision m. – Forgiveness – Conflict r. E. community networks
56	Creative thinking	Critical thinking	Decision m. – Forgiveness – Conflict r. – Appropriate identification models
57	Creative thinking	Critical thinking	Decision m. – Forgiveness – Conflict r. – Appropriate identification models
58	Creative thinking	Critical thinking	Decision m. – Forgiveness – Conflict r. – Appropriate identification models
59	Creative thinking	Critical thinking	Decision m. – Forgiveness – Conflict r. – Appropriate identification models
60	Creative thinking	Emotional education	Decision making – Forgiveness – Conflict resolution
61	Creative thinking		Decision making – Forgiveness – Conflict resolution
62	Creative thinking	Critical thinking	Decision m. – Forgiveness – Conflict r. – Appropriate identification models
63	Critical thinking		Decision making - Appropriate identification models
64	Critical thinking		Decision making - Appropriate identification models
65	Critical thinking		Decision making - Appropriate identification models
66	Critical thinking		Decision making - Appropriate identification models
67	Creative thinking		Decision making - Appropriate identification models
68	Critical thinking	Creative thinking	Decision making - Appropriate identification models
69	Critical thinking	Creative thinking	Decision making - Appropriate identification models
70	Critical thinking	Emotional education	Decision making – Appropriate identification models – Forgiveness
71	Critical thinking	Creative thinking	Decision making - Appropriate identification models
72	Critical thinking		Decision making - Appropriate identification models
73	Critical thinking	Collective well-being	Decision m. - Appropriate id. models - E. community networks



A hit for my community

At the community level, MVD not only seeks to impact the life and immediate environment of participants, but also the community, encouraging members to get involved in the program in such a way that they develop a sense of belonging to it, that appreciate it, that take over it so that, at a certain moment, they become managers and leaders of their own processes.

Peace-building is an issue that involves all the members of a territory, and this is precisely the main objective of the community component: To empower the abilities of not only the participants, but also the community, so that, in an articulated manner and using baseball as a tool, they can create environments for community living that benefit everyone.

The community component features a logical sequence of approaches aimed at the community in general. These community meetings are carried out regularly. The initial or opening meeting involves the “Presentation of the Program to the Community.” It is addressed to the community in general, and its purpose is to show the objective of the program, highlight its key aspects and characteristics, and provide other necessary information so that its members are actively involved in the process. The facilitator should start this first meeting in an engaging manner. That is why it is planned in such a way that

the participants become engaged through learning by feeling, learning by playing, and learning by doing, avoiding thus a lecture-type meeting. After the program is presented, the other regular community meetings, plus the extension activities, i.e., minga (cooperative and voluntary work for the common good) and the carnival tournament, will follow.



For instance, the community minga aims to give new meanings to community spaces, joining efforts and wills to keep them in good condition, so that they are used for what they were intended and in order to prevent them from becoming spaces for inappropriate activities. As a matter of fact, the community chooses a place that can become the baseball diamond and, with due notice, carries out the corresponding management of resources, planning, and consideration of other prerequisites, so that, in the midst of a space for sharing foods that are typical in the region—such as a *sancocho* (traditional soup), *frijolada* (red beans), etc.—, this place can be improved. It is the community itself that manages and leads this minga, taking over this space, turning it into its own, leaving its mark and group strength there, and thus embellishing it tangibly and intangibly, so that it will become attractive, functional, and part of the community heritage.

For purposes of illustration, the outline of such minga is presented below:



Title of the meeting	Community Minga		
Objective	To give new meanings to community spaces, joining efforts and wills to keep them in good condition, so that they are used for what they were intended and in order to prevent them from becoming spaces for inappropriate activities.		
Dimensions to be addressed	Collective well-being, creative thinking, critical thinking.		
Estimated duration	3 – 5 hours	Number of participants	200 aprox.
Materials and tools required			
QUAN- TITY	DESCRIPTION	QUAN- TITY	DESCRIPTION
2	90L pots	1	5-gallon bucket of white or light blue oil-based and/or Koraza paint.
1	Large plastic container with lid.	10	Shovels.
2	Stainless steel deep ladles.	5	Large brushes.
1	Stainless steel flat ladle.	5	Small brushes.
1	Metallic or earthen container.	20	Thick sandpapers.
	Fuel to cook food.	2	Trays or buckets to mix paints.
1	Stereo speaker.	200	Pieces of sheets.
200	Drinks.	24	Plastic bags (garbage).
200	Disposable cups.	1	Microphone.
200	Kits including plate, spoon, fork, etc. (each participant takes his/her own kit) .	200	Markers.
200	Paper molds: baseball bats, gloves, balls, helmets, diamonds (on colored papers).	200	Pita cords to hang the paper molds.
Rollo	Contact paper to cover paper implements (after writing on them). Another option could be to cover them with stretch film (according to the allocated budget).		

Development

In order to be well-prepared for this day, it is important to understand the following aspects:

Minga: Collective work done in favor of the community. It is a pre-Columbian tradition of community/cooperative and voluntary work for the common or reciprocal good. It can have different purposes for community benefit, such as the construction or improvement of public spaces or for the benefit of a single person or family.

In the case of the program, the community *minga* seeks to provide a meeting space for the participants, families, and community in general, where, besides strengthening their sense of belonging to their territory, participants can make good use of and give a new meaning to such public space (as mentioned in the objective).

Before this activity, the facilitator has already chosen, together with the community, the place where the recovery or improvement plan will take place, has requested the necessary permits to the municipal administration, and has summoned and requested support from the community in general—organizations, leaders, families, and children, adolescents and young people (abbreviated NNAJ in Spanish). After the call and the definition of the date and the meeting place, this activity can start.

Initial Activity (Dream for Community Living) - Duration: 30 minutos

The facilitator must arrive at the agreed place in advance to welcome those summoned. Upon their arrival, he/she should greet and welcome them and let them know the true meaning of the activity as a space for meeting, unity, and appropriation of community spaces.

Initially, the facilitator shares the work methodology in which the teams or committees that must be formed to carry out the activity are presented, as follows:

1. Food preparation committee (given a name using an analogy)
2. Space recovery or improvement committee (given a name using an analogy)
3. Cleaning committee (given a name using an analogy)
4. Recreational activities committee (only if the facilitator deems it necessary)
5. Other committees considered relevant by the facilitator.

Each committee must have a name referring to a baseball play, position or implement, as desired by its members. In addition to this, it is important to note that each of the committees will have an emblem, made by its members using their creativity, so that the whole community can easily recognize them during the whole activity.

The facilitator will freely distribute the committees (based on experience in the task, tastes or profiles of the participants or other criteria). Each team must have a person in charge—the umpire—chosen by its members. This person leads them and reports the progress made on the tasks assigned. When the activity is over, the umpire will analyze, along with his/her team, the outstanding (positive and to-be-improved) aspects and then proceed to the final evaluation, always emphasizing the importance of teamwork.



BEFORE THE MAIN STAGE:

Once the committees are formed and named, the facilitator proceeds to give each of the participants a sheet of paper, in which they must write anonymously what the place (of the *minga*) represents for them. Then, each participant or “player” must deposit them in a metallic or earthen container with fire, which will be previously decorated with phrases such as “I make the best plays in my community,” “a good baseball player always contributes to his/her community team,” etc.

While the sheets of paper burn down, the facilitator will reflect on the role and importance of each of the “players” in a community team, on the transformation of the game of life, and on how their “plays” contribute to making the community diamond shine or become blurred.

When the *minga* is over, there will be a re-opening of the site, which will be described in the final section of this worksheet.

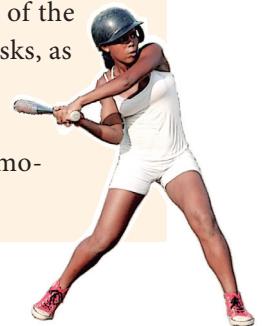
Main Stage (Experiencing the *Minga*) - Duration: 3 a 4 horas

Improvement and/or recovery of public space: This activity is aimed at cleaning and improving a space previously chosen by the facilitator and the community, with the previous approval of the municipal administration. It is important to choose a place which can be painted and requires other improvements that can be done by the people who participate. The team in charge of this distributes the tasks according to the needs of the space.

Drinks and foods will be delivered by the food preparation committee who will define whether it will be delivered to the whole group or by teams.

Foods and drinks: During the community *mingas*, the possibility of having the necessary elements for the preparation of food is taken into account. This is important as it also serves to strengthen the bonds among the community and is considered as an opportunity to prepare food typical of the region, where everyone contributes what they can. The team in charge of this activity is responsible for planning the foods to be prepared, as well as for their distribution. Each participant must bring their own plate, spoon, fork, etc.

Sound: A person must be in charge of the music and microphone. The microphone will be used by the facilitator, sports leader or the person in charge of the sound to transmit messages that encourage the completion of the tasks, as well as to reiterate the importance of the activity, teamwork, sense of belonging, and use of time (time for foods and drinks, time of completion, closing activity). It is also important to play music to motivate the participants.



Cleaning: his team is in charge of picking up all the garbage and weeds that are found. Minors can join this team as long as they are accompanied and supported by responsible adults who must take into account that, when collecting trash, they might find glass materials, sharp objects, toxic substances, etc.

Its members must collect the waste generated during the activity and keep an eye on each team so that they will leave the place in which they worked completely cleaned. They are also in charge of collecting the materials from each team at the end of the task and handing them in to the facilitator.

Recreational activities: This committee is created only if the facilitator deems it necessary. If this is the case, a small group of people will be chosen and will be in charge of leading activities with very young children and adolescents who cannot perform tasks that are risky for them. Therefore, there must be coloring, recreational activities, etc. for them.

Final Activity: (Let's Reopen the Site Leaving Our Community Mark)

– **Duration:** 30 minutes

Within each team, members evaluate the event by answering the following questions: Positive aspects of the activity? What needs improvement? What did you learn from the activity? The leader–umpire–of each team shares their results in a discussion led by the facilitator. It is necessary to properly document the event with photographs and a text.

To celebrate the reopening of the site, all participants get together forming a large circle. The facilitator tells the participants that everyone has their own mark which allows them to make the best plays in their community. Then each participant is given a marker and must take a paper baseball implement—there are several, such as bats, gloves, helmets, balls, diamonds, etc.—to create the personal mark that they wish to leave in this place, keeping in mind their position in the community baseball game. For example: “As a community pitcher, I want to leave my pitches of good actions in this place so that they will contribute to the well-being of my community diamond.”

Then each of the symbols can be covered in contact paper (or other protecting material) and hung around the place, in such a way that it can be observed that everyone has left their personal mark in that place. At the end, the facilitator asks the following question: “And now, what does this site mean to me?” generating thus a moment of community reflection.

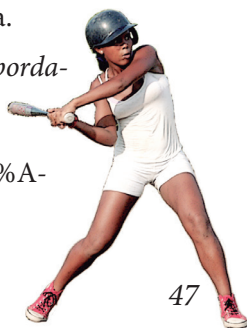






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