

## 7 Rio 2016

### A new world

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#### Introduction

In 2009, the city of Rio de Janeiro was chosen above Madrid, Tokyo, and Chicago to host the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The evaluation commission of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) reported the support from municipal, state, and federal governments; athletes; and local population as particular strengths of the Brazilian bid. The prospect of awarding the Games to the first South American city to host the Games was also important to encourage the IOC to support the bid (Revista Época, 2009). Since Barcelona in 1992, the possibility of positive legacies for the host and for the Olympic movement has been one of the most important points in the IOC's evaluation of host city applications (Payne, 2005). Upon reflection, Rio's official candidature file described the possibility of positive legacies in a mostly superficial way. The file explored themes as diverse as legal outcomes, immigration formalities, finances, marketing, the environment, politics, and the economic climate (Rio2016, 2009). Small extracts of the Rio's bid book focused on showcasing legacies in terms of urban revitalisation and social transformation (Rio2016, 2009). However, the methodical planning or implementation of legacies was definitely not given any attention whatsoever.

After Rio was selected to host the 2016 Games, the Brazilian Ministry of Sport launched a document entitled 'Rio 2016 Legacy Book' to provide a more detailed insight into and support for the Games. This book of intentions reinforced the focus on urban revitalisation and social transformations as desired legacies of the Games (Brasil – Ministério do Esporte, 2009c). The book was divided into three parts. The first part provided insight into the unique characteristics of Brazil and highlighted its economic growth. Additionally, this issue also addressed expectations about improvement of elite sport in the country facilitated primarily through exchange of experiences with other countries. The second section described the expected urban and environmental legacies, addressing positive impacts on natural resources and urban mobility in the city of Rio de Janeiro. This issue detailed some plans related to building and reforming of green areas, cleaning bays and lakes, and improving the whole public transportation system (trains, subways, and rapid transit buses). The third part described expected social legacies, such as inclusion and promotion of lower income populations through educational sport programmes.

While the candidature file did not specifically mention a mass sport participation legacy, the Ministry of Sport's supplementary book of intentions briefly mentioned sport participation. However, once the hosting rights for the 2016 Games had been awarded to Rio, very little was done to transform these intentions into actions. After the 2007 Rio Pan American Games, isolated discussions about sport participation and sport events appeared in the literature across Brazil (Almeida, Mezzadri, & Marchi Júnior, 2009; Curi, Knijnik, & Mascarenhas, 2011). All of these studies failed to show scientific evidence of increased levels of sport participation as a clear consequence of hosting the Pan American Games. Recent investigations have indicated that the level of sport participation in Brazil is low (Bernardelli, Pereira, & Kortt, 2020; Brasil – Ministério do Esporte, 2015). Government figures have shown that, among Brazilian adults, 25.6% practiced sport, 28.5% practiced some type of physical activity (e.g., walk to their job place), while 45.9% were completely sedentary (Brasil – Ministério do Esporte, 2015). More recently, Bernardelli et al. (2020) show that 57% of the male population and 65% of the female population, between 18- and 64-year-old, are totally sedentary. These are alarming numbers that deserve close attention of the Brazilian government.

### **The socio-economic and political context in Brazil**

To understand the socio-economic and political context of the 2016 Olympic Games, we start with a short description of the history of Brazil, which can be divided into three main periods: colonial, imperial, and republican periods. The colonial period dated from 1500 to 1808 and was marked by the dominion of Portugal over the colony. During this period, the economy was based on an extraction system, which involved agriculture and mining, using slave labour. The imperial period was dominant between 1808 and 1889, when Brazil was characterised as a monarchical political regime, keeping the economic and social model of the previous period. The republican period begun in 1889 and can be divided into old republic (1889–1930), 'Vargas' era (1930–45), populist republic (1945–64), military government (1964–85), and the new republic (1985–current) (Bueno, 2010). Despite all the problems associated with a non-democratic government, during the military period, sport participation in Brazil was generally viewed to be strong. For example, during that time, physical education was compulsory at all levels of education, from elementary school to university (Oliveira, 2012). Since 1985, the country has been a free democracy in the maturing process (Mollo & Saad-Filho, 2006). In terms of sport participation, the country has passed through much retrocession in the last 30–35 years, after democracy was reinstalled. Further description about socio-economic changes in the country in this period may explain why sport participation promotion has been far from a priority.

The new republic period has been marked by large socio-economic gaps in the society, where only few individuals are very rich, and most of the people are poor or extremely poor (Fausto, 2012). This situation has not recently changed. Table 7.1 shows that, during the 2000s, a higher percentage of income was

*Table 7.1* Brazil – Percentage of income held by the richest (highest 10% and highest 20%) and by the poorest (lowest 10% and 20%) (2001–13)

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2011	2012	2013
Highest 10%	47.32	46.83	46.00	45.06	45.15	44.48	43.57	42.93	42.45	41.89	41.67	41.82
Lowest 10%	0.71	0.81	0.79	0.89	0.93	0.96	0.90	0.99	0.98	0.98	1.04	0.97
Highest 20%	63.45	62.93	62.21	61.24	61.04	60.43	59.57	58.85	58.34	57.56	57.18	57.39
Lowest 20%	2.40	2.59	2.59	2.82	2.90	3.00	2.97	3.14	3.17	3.25	3.38	3.28

*Source:* IndexMundi (2017). Data is not available for 2010.

consistently in the hands of the richest, while the poorest held very small percentages of the total income of the country (IndexMundi, 2017). Historically, the 10% richest people have held more than 40% of the total income in the country.

In between these two strata, the middle class has been constantly flattened. It is true that the last 30 years have been an era of profound changes in the Brazilian society, which has experienced periods of no economic growth at all (in the 1990s), followed by periods of significant economic growth (from 2010 to 2013). Until the early 1990s, the country's economy was chaotic, with an inflation average of approximately 760% per year. This period was marked by an unstable political system which culminated with the impeachment of president Fernando Collor in 1992 (Bueno, 2010; Fausto, 2012). In economic terms, the first steps towards change were taken in 1994, when the country settled on a set of strict economic policies, mainly to control the inflation. In 1995, with the election of Fernando Henrique Cardoso as president, the country began to pursue new economic ideals. The economy was opened to foreign trade and investments, and many state industries and companies were privatised. The country began to establish more stable political institutions, greater transparency in the democratic process, and a free press, helping to improve the democratisation of the country (The Economist, 2009). In 2003, when President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva started his term, the inflation was already under control and the country started to grow economically. Although he had come from an opposition party, President Lula had his merits in improving the economy, mainly because he did not change the major economic policies implanted by his political adversary and predecessor. He also focused on social programmes, to decrease the gap between the rich and the poor, and on diplomatic affairs, to improve the country's participation on the international stage (Cason & Power, 2009).

In 2011, Brazil was classified as the sixth-largest economy in the world, ahead of Great Britain (Centre for Economics and Business Research, 2012). Brazil's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) annual growth rate from 1990 to 2015 is presented in Figure 7.1. The GDP growth was relatively instable from 1990, reaching a peak of almost 8% in 2010, but falling to negative values in 2015.

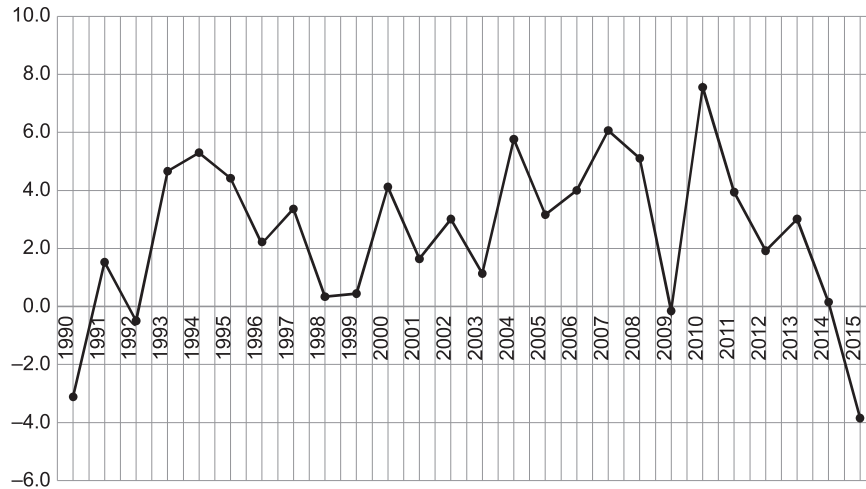


Figure 7.1 Brazil's GDP growth (annual %).

Source: The World Bank (2016).

This represents the ongoing instability of the Brazilian economy over the past 25 years.

The economic boom, which started in 1994, was marked by a period of social development never before seen in Brazil. Especially in the 2000s, as a consequence of social programmes to reduce poverty and economic policies to create availability of credit to the population, there was a certain decrease in the socio-economic differences inside the population (Erber, 2011). Meanwhile, there was an increase in government spending, which was not necessarily related to improvements in the country's infrastructure or educational system. Much of the increased spending was due to a greater number of new public job positions opened by the government (administrative functions and with political parties bias) (The Economist, 2013). Most of these positions were made in areas of administration rather than critical public services such as education and health. These new positions were not really needed, but rather were important for populist political purposes, enabling the party in power to demonstrate its value to the population and in return receive a more positive result in future elections.

However, the provision of public jobs was not a sustainable strategy. The effects of the poor management of public monies started to be felt in the second term of Mr. Lula's successor – Ms. Dilma Rousseff. At the beginning of 2016, Brazil had an unemployment rate close to 11.2% (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística – IBGE, 2016), a negative growth rate, a polarised society for and against the government, and a serious political crisis. When widespread schemes of corruption and diversion of huge amounts of public money were publicised, the impeachment of President Rousseff became unavoidable. Ms Rousseff was

impeached on 17 April 2016, three months before the opening ceremony of the Rio summer Games.

The 2016 Olympic Games happened in the midst of this turbulent socio-economic and political context. The country that once was considered a new economic power when it won the bid, seven years later, at the time of Games, was back in another deep economic crisis. Despite the crisis, the 2016 Olympic Games was staged without major problems. The international press praised the event, asserting that from a purely sporting event perspective, it was an extraordinary success (Davies, 2016). However, the success of the event itself should not be the only consideration when evaluating legacy of sport mega-events. This chapter discusses whether some actions directly related to the Rio 2016 Games have left or have the potential to leave a sport legacy for the population in the decades following the event. The structure of this chapter includes a description of the evolution of sport policy in Brazil; a discussion of the structure, policy, governance, and funding of community sport; a brief discussion about possible legacies of the Rio 2016 Games; and finally a description about sport participation trends in the country before, during, and after the Games.

### **The evolution of sport policy in Brazil**

Brazil was significantly influenced by the British sport system, where competitive sport has been practiced in clubs or associations. The British sport system based on sport club membership and association governance. Sport clubs became a cultural and social reference for the immense contingent of immigrants who came to Brazil in the twentieth century. Many sport clubs were founded by groups of immigrants and became a meeting point for people with the same origin, who looked for spaces to share their cultural traditions. It was in this context that several European sports began to be practiced in Brazil in a more consistent way (Barros & Mazzei, 2012). As a result, sport clubs have formed the basis of competitive sport in Brazil. From the clubs, in the 1940s onwards, state federations and national confederations were born. Federations and confederations represent the apex of sport governing bodies in the country for most sports.

Brazil's sport policies can be divided into two historical periods (Tubino, 2002). The first period, from 1941 to 1985, had characteristics of total state control over all organised sport practices. During 44 years, the Brazilian government had all sport policies under the control of one large governing body – the National Sport Council (NSC), whose aim was to regulate and supervise the national confederations, state federations, and sport clubs; to organise competitions; and to encourage sport participation. The second historical period started in 1985 and had as its main characteristic the democratisation of sporting organisations in Brazil, largely due to the cessation of military rule. The 1988 National Constitution (still in effect today) gives greater power to and underlines the autonomy of sport entities (e.g., clubs) and governing bodies (e.g., federations and confederations) (Brasil, 1988). In this period, the single most important structural change was the creation of the Ministry of Sport, in 1995. Figure 7.2 illustrates the key structures that make up the Brazilian sport system (until 2018).

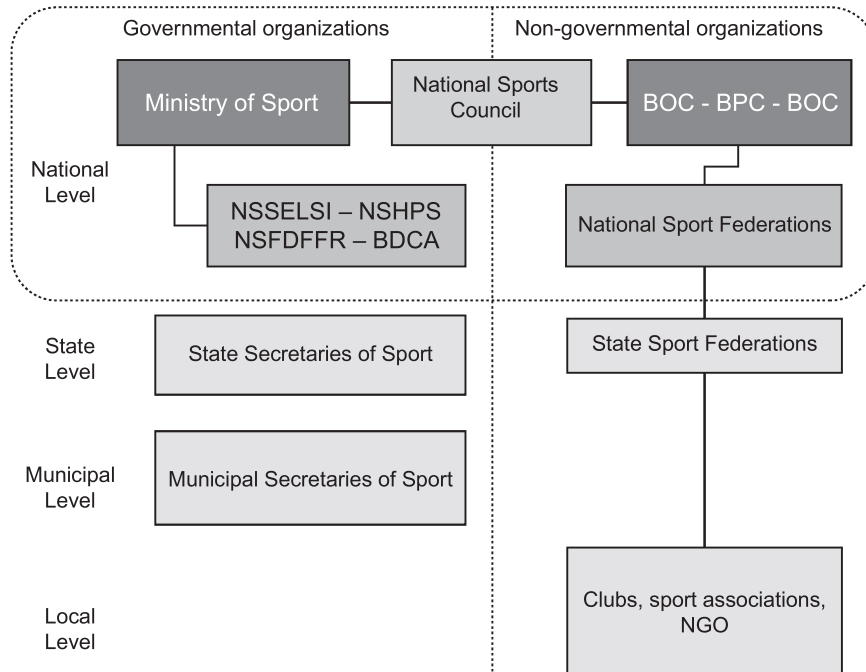


Figure 7.2 Brazilian sport system.

Source: Adapted from Brasil (1998), Mazzei, Meira, Bastos, Böhme, and De Bosscher (2015), Meira, Bastos, and Böhme (2012).

Legend: NSSELSI – National Secretary of Sport, Education, Leisure and Social Inclusion; NSHPS – National Secretary of High-Performance Sport; NSFDFR – National Secretary of Football and of Football Fans Rights; BDCA – Brazilian Doping Control Authority; BOC – Brazilian Olympic Committee; BPC – Brazilian Paralympic Committee; BCC – Brazilian Clubs Confederation; NGO – Non-governmental organisations.

The current Brazilian sport system is structured from the perspective of two sub-systems. The first one consists of governmental organisations (Figure 7.2, left side). The second one consists of non-governmental organisations (Figure 7.2, right side). Both sub-systems are responsible for sport participation at national, state, municipal, or local level. Governmental organisations propose laws, design projects, and implement programmes to foster sport development in the country. The state and municipal levels in the governmental system have autonomy to develop their own sport policies both vertically and horizontally (Böhme & Bastos, 2015; Meira et al., 2012). In other words, they do not need to report to federal institutions.

In the non-governmental system, vertical interactions exist between levels to support the coordination of competitions and the development of regulations and other governance-related issues. But vertical interactions do not happen to define policies and strategic plans to develop sport programmes. Local clubs form

state federations, which in turn form a national confederation, which is the official national sport governing body for an individual sport or a group of sports. National confederations report themselves directly to the National Olympic Committee (Brazilian Olympic Committee – BOC) and to international sport federations (Mazzei et al., 2015).

Across Brazil, school-aged children and teenagers also play recreational and competitive sport at schools. Furthermore, collegiate sport is primarily recreational with competitive opportunities pursued through sports clubs. Consequently, if college-aged young people decide to engage in competitive sport, they tend to do it within sport-specific club structures. This creates a significant demand for social sport clubs, which become responsible for creating, managing, and sustaining long-term sport opportunities and pathways for athletes, from youth to adulthood. The financial burden of sport development has been on the shoulders of social clubs (Bastos & Mazzei, 2015; Rocha & Bastos, 2011). Consequently, the club model has become exclusionary as opportunities are not offered equally to all children and teenagers interested in pursuing competitive sport (Böhme & Bastos, 2015).

In terms of policy and the legal process, the government has played an active role in creating and passing laws that seek to enhance the sport system in Brazil. Besides defining the relationships among entities and organisations, the sport cornerstone law (law 9.615/1998) established a set of principles to guide the administration of sport in Brazil. According to this law, sport must be understood as a multidimensional concept made up of four dimensions: educational sport, participation (leisure) sport, elite (performance) sport, and grassroots sport. In 2001, another important law (law 10.264/2001) brought some major changes regarding the financial support allocated to sport participation in Brazil. Since the introduction of this law, new funding arrangements have been developed whereby the Brazilian Olympic Committee (BOC) and the Brazilian Paralympic Committee (BPC) receive 1.7% and 0.3%, respectively, from the gross national lottery revenue. A small part of this amount is allocated to educational sport (10% to school sport and 5% to university sport). The majority of funding is allocated to run the BOC and the BPC. The BOC transfers part of its money to the Brazilian national sport confederations. Each sport confederation receives different amounts, determined by previous competition results reflecting what the BOC refer to as *meritocracy*. Each confederation is responsible for managing the money in an effective manner to promote its sport. Unfortunately, many confederations have not been effective in managing this money to promote the development of sport (Almeida & Marchi Júnior, 2011). The majority of funding has been applied in elite athletes with very little invested in the promotion of sport participation or to support grassroots programmes (Rocha, 2016).

In 2004, the federal government established the programme of athletic “scholarships” (law 10.891/2004), which has provided financial support for a limited number of athletes of different levels (youth, national, international, and Olympic level). The ultimate aim of this programme has been to fund elite athletes. To be funded, the athlete has to show outstanding performance in their level of

performance. For example, to apply for the international-level scholarship, an athlete must have participated in at least one official competition organised by an international federation in the year immediately before the application. Similarly, to apply for the Olympic level scholarship, the athlete must have participated in the last edition of the Games. This applies for both Olympic and Paralympic athletes. In 2006, the federal government introduced tax incentives for sport (based on the law 11.438/2006), which has allowed organisations and individuals to deduct a small percentage of federal taxes to sponsor sport-related projects.

The hosting of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games played a significant role in enhancing the political salience of sport across Brazil. At the same time, it worked as a catalyst to support the creation of formal policies for sport development (Rocha, 2016), although the majority of policies focus on elite sport development. Recent research has emphasised this point, underlining the imbalance between investments in elite sport and in the other dimensions of sport (educational, grassroots and participation) (Böhme & Bastos, 2015; De Bosscher, Shibli, Westerbeek, & Van Bottenburg, 2015).

In addition to an unequal distribution of resources, sport policies in Brazil have been object of political manipulation. Usually, new governments discard previous programmes and develop new policies, simply to have their 'own' policies in place. Thus, many policies do not have long-term effects because they are almost always new policies (unless a certain party continues in power for a long period) (Mazzei et al., 2015; Mezzadri, 2014). Social and economic problems in the country have been used to not make sport participation a priority. For example, the current human development index of the country is 0.730, which gives the country a rank of 85 out of 187 countries (UNDP, 2013). This is not good. Certainly, the priorities of country should be on a policy to improve health, education, and other basic needs, to consequently decrease social inequalities. We argue that sport participation could and should be used as an important instrument to improve health and education and to address other social issues (Grix & Carmichael, 2012). This has not been done because of the lack of political interest.

Sport policy in Brazil has been characterised by a fragmented and erratic process. At least, three different reasons can be pointed to explain the lack of success of sport policies in the country. First, the organisational structure of sport does not favour communication between governmental and non-governmental organisations. Second, most of the laws have been ineffective to promote sport participation and grassroots sport, because too much money and energy have been directed to policies that favour elite sport. Third, sport policies have been proposed with short-term political objectives, lacking a long-term perspective, hindering the engagement of people in organised and non-organised sport participation.

### **The governance of community sport in Brazil**

Brazil's National Sport Policy (NSP) oversees four dimensions of sport – educational, participation, grassroots, and elite, with the participation and grassroots dimensions being of most relevance to community sport. The NSP has five

specific objectives, among which two are directly related to improving sport participation of the population. The first objective of this document proposes to broaden the access to sport and leisure to improve the quality of life of the Brazilian population, while the second objective proposes to guarantee access to sport practices to all, in order to promote construction and strengthening of citizenship (Brasil, 2005). At the federal level, the Ministry of Sport and the National Secretariat of Sport, Education, Leisure and Social Inclusion lead on community sport policy.

To support sport community implementation, the federal government has conducted three main programmes (Rocha, 2016). The Infrastructure for Sport Initiation programme has the objective of increasing the supply of sport facilities in order to boost sport participation in deprived areas. Three years before the 2016 Games, 263 municipalities around the country had their projects approved by the federal government and should have received new sport facilities to boost sport participation. Specifically, this programme focuses on encouraging practices of Olympic and Paralympic sport, with an estimated budget of approximately US\$ 400 million (Garcia & Valente, 2017). Until February 2017, only one sport centre was opened (Garcia & Valente, 2017). This is yet another example of political hyperbole, creating positive news and stories about new progressive policies that are ultimately never delivered. The second programme is called Sport and Leisure in the City. This programme has created partnerships between the federal government (funding agency) and cities (executing agencies) to popularise sport participation in public areas, such as parks, squares, and beaches. According to the Ministry of Sport, in 10 years of existence, this programme has benefited more than 10 million people, in 1,277 different cities, with an investment of about US\$62.5 million (Brasil, 2014). Although these numbers may appear impressive, there is limited detailed data about the participants, frequency of participation, and retention/dropout rates. The third programme, Healthy Life, started in 2012 and focuses exclusively on the elderly population. According to the only report so far, this programme has reached 11,400 elderly people, in 12 cities, with a budget of about US\$2 million (Secretaria Especial do Esporte, 2019). While initially impressive, when considered against the more than 30 million people aged 60+ in Brazil (Paradella, 2018), these numbers are clearly quite modest.

States and municipalities have sport secretariats, which usually have small budgets to support community sport. State secretariats are almost silent regarding community sport and tend to delegate the responsibility to secretariats in the municipalities. Rocha (2016) described that Brazilian cities' sport secretariats do have special programmes to support community sport locally. However, very few cities have sufficiently large budgets to effectively implement community sport. City programmes are often shy initiatives, which have offered no long-term benefits for the population in terms of sport participation and development of an active way of life. In order to respond to a demand for community sport, cities tend to rely on federal programmes to promote sport locally. As illustrated earlier, some federal programmes have in fact been created to fund city initiatives. The financial responsibility of funding sport at all levels, including community sport, has been on the shoulders of the federal government. Unfortunately, neither the

federal government have created effective programmes nor the cities have been effective to use some federal moneys they have received to promote community sport.

### **The Olympic and Paralympic Games legacy – Rio 2016**

In October 2009, the IOC chose Rio de Janeiro to host the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games – the first ever to be hosted in South America. Hosting the Olympic Games was part of the Brazilian government strategy to be part of a select group of countries that host hallmark events (Brasil – Ministério do Esporte, 2009c). This strategy generally reflects the country's aspiration to play a more prominent role in international sport and, in so doing, also improve its international diplomacy (Rocha, 2017). The Rio 2016 bid committee proposed to focus on four key strategies: engaging young people, social transformation through sport, regional outreach, and global promotion (Rio2016, 2009). Underpinning this, the bid committee planned to use the Games to enhance the global reputation of Brazil as progressive society and an exciting place to live and do business.

During the bidding process for the Rio 2016, the Brazilian Ministry of Sport published two legacy books – one describing the expected urban and environmental changes in the country, and the other describing the desired social changes (Brasil – Ministério do Esporte, 2009c). In these books, the Brazilian Ministry of Sport attempted to justify the viability of the Games as a profitable event with long-lasting legacies. The urban and environmental legacy book focused on revitalisation of the port area; regeneration of the surrounding areas of the Maracanã stadium, the Nilton Santos Olympic stadium, and the Sambodromo; implementation of a mass transportation system; expansion and improvement of the subway and metropolitan trains network; revitalisation of river, lagoons, and basins waters; enhancing of the Guanabara bay depollution programme; and caring of parks and forests in the city (Brasil – Ministério do Esporte, 2009b). The social legacy book focused on the Second Shift programme – a federally funded social programme that aims to provide good quality sport opportunities in public schools for 3 million young Brazilians every year. There was also the intention of strengthening More Education, another federally funded programme, which aims to increase and improve sporting infrastructure across the public school system (Brasil – Ministério do Esporte, 2009a). Both the state government and the municipal government of Rio de Janeiro have developed parallel projects in an attempt to leverage a legacy from the Games. However, most of these projects have suffered from the lack of adequate funding. An interesting example is the RJ Sport programme, launched by the state government in 2013, aiming to provide sport instruction to children in favelas and poor areas around the state. In 2015, the programme was suspended due to the lack of financial resources (Konchiski, 2015). Later that year, a smaller version of the programme was reintroduced but faced ongoing threats of closure due to the lack of funding.

At the city level, Rio de Janeiro proposed two programmes to promote sport participation. The first programme was named Olympic Villages. This programme was conducted by the secretary of sport and leisure of the city, which built sport

facilities in poor neighbourhoods. These spaces were built in those areas of the city because they targeted underprivileged kids, who would not have sport-related leisure opportunities if the facilities had not been constructed (Lauritzen, 2016). The programme started with 10 villages, but after the 2016 Games, the city of Rio de Janeiro had 22 Olympic villages. Some of these villages have an interesting variety of facilities, including swimming pools and indoor gymnasiums. However, others are quite simple, offering basically a multi-purpose outdoor sport court and a skateboard track (Prefeitura\_Rio\_de\_Janeiro, 2016). Unfortunately, five months after the Games, 13 of the 22 villages were closed (G1\_Rio, 2017), illustrating the lack of planning and genuine commitment of the city with regards to any specific sport participation-related legacy. The most cited motive for so many closures has been the lack of funding to maintain them. The city has faced a major economic crisis, which has affected even salary payments of administrative city servants in the last year (G1\_Rio, 2017).

A second programme, Olympic Experimental Gymnasiums, was developed by the city's Secretary of Education. This programme focused on building modern sport facilities inside public schools in the city where elementary/middle school children could practice eight Olympic sports (track and field/athletics, swimming, volleyball, handball, wrestling, table tennis, judo, and badminton). Although the programme does provide the opportunity for sport participation, it cannot be defined as a community sport initiative for two reasons (Hofman-Moura & Rocha, 2016). First, its primary purpose is to prepare talented teenagers to be elite athletes (Prefeitura do Rio de Janeiro, 2011). Second, it targets students who are sport participants already, simply relocating them to new schools, where they can receive better quality coaching and infrastructure (O Globo, 2012).

The Brazilian government has proposed a good number of programmes. However, it has been ineffective in the implementation and evaluation of such programmes. The poor administration of the programmes has been a result of them being little more than a tool of populist politics – a desire to create and publicise the right ideas and ideals to support efforts to win the next election. Commonly, following elections, the programmes are dismantled by the winning party. If the opponent wins, they do not carry on the programmes because they do not want to promote their rival's ideas. If the proposer wins, they may also dismantle the programmes and justify this based on a lack of funding. These examples illustrate the challenges confronting the sport-related legacy of the Rio 2016 Games. The Games have failed to resolve many of the problems of implementing mass sport participation initiatives. If anything, it could be argued that hosting the Games made the problem worse because the number of ineffective programmes that were introduced as a result of the Games increased exponentially.

Apart from programmes, a federal decision can exemplify the little importance of sport participation in the context of the Brazilian policy and politics. A month after the Games, in September 2016, the federal government concluded a school curriculum reform and decided that physical education should no longer be mandatory within high schools (Cancian, Dias, & Saldana, 2016). The message was clear: the federal government does not prioritise educating people on the

importance of an active way of life, thus, compromising the entire value of the Games as an instrument to promote opportunities of sport participation. This part of the reform was later revoked, keeping physical education in the high school curriculum, but the message had already been sent. The event passed and no benefits are likely to be realised in terms of increased participation in community sport and physical activity.

### **Participation trends – before, during, and after the Games**

Neither governmental nor non-governmental organisations have ever offered a comprehensive report about sport participation trends in Brazil. Some studies conducted in different areas pointed that the levels of participation in sport and engagement in physical activity have been very low among Brazilian residents (Baretta, Baretta, & Peres, 2007; da Silva & Malina, 2000; Dumith et al., 2016; Hallal et al., 2012; Matsudo et al., 2002). For example, da Silva and Malina (2000) found that 85% of boys and 94% of girls (aged 14–15 years) were physically inactive (following the standards proposed by Crocker, Bailey, Faulkner, Kowalski, & McGrath, 1997), in a city of Rio de Janeiro state. Matsudo et al. (2002) showed that only 39.4% of adult population in metropolitan areas of Sao Paulo could be considered physically active. Dumith et al. (2016) indicated that the tendency of low sport/physical activity participation is present not only in southeast big cities (like Rio and Sao Paulo) but also in other parts of the country. Investigating a small city in the northeast of Brazil, they found that only 12.6% of young people (aged 13–19 years) were physically active. Recent data from the Ministry of Sport suggested that 45.9% of Brazilian population do not do any physical activity or sport regularly (Brasil – Ministério do Esporte, 2015). These results show that any help to improve the level of physical activity (and mainly physical exercise) in the country, mainly among the youngsters, would be extremely important. In order to accomplish this, authorities in the country really need to broaden its actions and think beyond their willingness to form new Olympic champions.

The candidature file for the Rio 2016 proposed that hosting the Games would be important to encourage sport participation and healthy lifestyle in the country (Hofman-Mourao & Rocha, 2016). Now, after the event, we can say that the proposals outlined in the candidature file were illusions, which were likely designed to misinform and convince the IOC members to support the bidding. Rio 2016 did have a few projects to promote sport participation (as illustrated earlier), but they were never integrated into a larger strategic plan. In March 2013, Rio organising committee launched the sustainability management plan for the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games (Rio2016, 2013). The plan describes environmental, economic, and social aims that should have been realised during and after the Games. However, the plan did not mention sport participation, physical exercise, physical activity, or active lifestyles. It is noteworthy that in the sustainability management plan website, the Rio organising committee used to publicise sport participation as one of its aims. It states: “We plan the Games with people in mind, in order to create benefits such as work experience, new knowledge, adoption of Olympic

and Paralympic values and inspiration to practice sport” (Rio2016, 2013). After the Games, this website was taken down.

Among the afore-mentioned projects, we would highlight Move Brazil, a programme originally ran by a non-profit institution – Social Service of the Commerce (SESC) – which organises and manages educational and sport programmes for people who work in Brazilian commerce. The original aim of the programme was to motivate regular citizens to become physically active by incorporating exercise in their daily routines (e.g., walking or cycling to work instead of driving). In 2013, the Rio 2016 Olympic Public Authority joined this non-profit programme as part of its strategy to promote sport participation and physical activity. The main purpose of the Olympic Public Authority was to coordinate federal, state, and municipal government actions, in order to guarantee the fulfilment of the promises made to the IOC (and ultimately to the population). We agree with Hofman-Mourao and Rocha (2016) when they asserted that the Rio 2016 Olympic Public Authority decided to join an already existing programme to fill the gaps in the state planning related to sport participation. This way, they created a substitute measure to accomplish something that the state was supposed to do but has not done – support sport participation. Clearly, increasing sport participation was never a strategic aim of the state. Consequently, the state has not partnered with the Rio 2016 organising committee to develop a serious plan for sport participation legacy.

## **Discussion and conclusion**

In terms of supporting sport participation, it is difficult to identify progressive policies or outcomes in Brazil. As mentioned, the country has prioritised investment into elite sport, mainly after being chosen as the host of the 2016 Olympic Games (Rocha, 2016), although there are some important exceptions among not-for-profit organisations. The most notable exception is the so-called ‘S’ system – a system composed by 11 not-for-profit organisations, whose main mission is to provide professional education and social services for people who work in commerce, industry, and other sectors of the Brazilian economy. Inside the ‘S’ system, there are two organisations that should be mentioned as positive influencers of sport participation in Brazil: the Social Service of the Commerce (SESC) and Social Service of the Industry (SESI). Both organisations have invested in sport participation as a tool for education and social well-being. SESC has branches in all 26 Brazilian states and in the federal district, serving 2,200 cities. Across the country, SESC offers sport classes and training in 30 different sport disciplines, using 113 multipurpose gymnasiums, 324 swimming pools, 504 health clubs, 148 soccer fields, 299 outdoor sport courts, and 11 track and field (athletics) facilities. More importantly, SESC offers physical exercise and sport oriented by physical education teachers and sport professionals for children, adolescents, adults, and elderly people, focusing on social inclusion, leisure, and education. Supporting elite sport is not part of SESC’s mission. Since 2003, SESC sport programmes have had the United Nations’ (UN) certification, for excellent services rendered.

Similarly, SESI has used sport participation as a tool for education. The mission statement of SESI proposes to promote quality of life of workers in the industry, with a focus on education, health, and leisure (SESI, 2016). SESI also has branches in all Brazilian states and in the federal district, serving 1,304 cities. In the process of educating people to work in the industry, sport has played a fundamental role. SESI has sport schools in almost all its branches. Historically, these sport schools have focused on giving opportunities of sport participation to industry workers and their families. From 2009, some branches have changed this focus and started investing in sport training with competitive aims (SESI, 2015). The best-known example is the branch of SESI in Sao Paulo, which now has not only sport training for youth and junior athletes but also professional sport teams in different disciplines, such as volleyball, swimming, and judo (SESI, 2015). Although some SESI branches have changed their focus from sport participation to sport performance, most of the branches still provide sport opportunities for a large number of children and adolescents.

While investigations have reported that organisations from the ‘S’ system are positive influencers of sport participation (Bastos & Böhme, 2016; Mazzei et al., 2015), it appears that social clubs (not-for-profit organisations) have done little to increase sport participation. That is because most of the social clubs have historically provided opportunities for a privileged minority of talented athletes only. There are exceptions, but they are rare. The ‘S’ system organisations are funded by taxes from the commerce and industry; therefore, they usually charge cheaper fees (or no fees at all) when compared to social clubs, which depend on the membership fees to survive.

In the country, there are a selected, relatively small number of clubs that have been considered ‘successful’ organisations primarily because they have trained athletes who participated in Olympic Games and world championships (Barros & Mazzei, 2012). In fact, preparing elite athletes has been the most publicised mission of the Brazilian clubs, and the clubs have taken this mission as their *raison d’être*. For example, most of the Brazilian athletes (390 out of 465 athletes – 84%) who were part of Team Brazil in the 2016 Games came from social clubs; about a third of these athletes (122 out of 390) came from only five clubs (Marra, 2016). The clubs that have Olympic athletes are well regarded and considered ‘successful’ as a ‘club that trained Olympic athletes’. However, in the country, only 31 clubs can claim to have trained Olympic athletes (Caixa, 2016). Recently, clubs in this list started to receive federal money from the lotteries, to foster the training of new Olympic athletes (Caixa, 2016).

We are not advocating against clubs being used to support and train elite athletes. We are advocating for clubs being used to promote sport participation far and beyond elite sport. The country has an estimate of 14,000 clubs, most of them not being successful in, or not even focusing on, preparing elite athletes (Barros & Mazzei, 2012). Probably, those 31 clubs will not change their focus from elite sport, because they have been successful in doing this and now are receiving public money to continue to do so. However, there are thousands of other clubs that could have a positive impact on sport participation in the country. In order to

do so, the country needs micro- and meso-level changes in the sporting system. First, at micro level, club managers and sport professionals who work in these organisations need to move away from the idea of drafting young “talents” and winning youth championships. Rather, they should look for increasing the number of children and teenagers practicing sport and keeping them practicing for years. Second, at the meso level, government and sport authorities in the country must understand the importance of sport participation. If they understand this importance, clubs might be funded not only to train elite athletes but also to provide opportunities for mass sport participation. Considering that the government has already a policy to fund elite sport inside clubs, it is desirable that they have a similar policy to fund sport participation inside the same organisations.

Besides the clubs and the ‘S’ system organisations, Brazil has many so-called non-governmental organisations (NGO) that have used sport as an educational and leisure tool. In the last census, there were about 290,700 NGOs in Brazil, and about 24,900 (8.6 %) of these organisations are related to sport activities (IBGE, 2012). These NGOs represent positive influencers and promoters of sport participation in the country. Most of them use public spaces (e.g. parks, squares, public schools) to promote sport participation. However, the geographical distribution of these NGOs has created some difficulties to promote sport participation equally across the country. Brazil is divided into five geographical regions: north, north-east, west-centre, south, and southeast. Seventy-seven per cent of all sport NGOs are located in the south and southeast regions of the country (IBGE, 2012). Unsurprisingly, these two regions are the most wealthy ones, accounting for 71.6% of the national GDP (Valor Econômico, 2014). Beyond using sport as an educational and leisure tool, some sporting NGOs have helped the development and training of elite athletes. For example, in Rio 2016, three Brazilian Olympic medallists started their sport careers in ONGs located in poor regions of the country. This may be a positive fact if we consider that these organisations have given opportunities for athletes to practice their sport up to the highest level with the aim of inspiring a large number of children to practice sport regularly. Hopefully, the tendency of supporting competitive and elite sport, maybe as a consequence of hosting sport mega-events, will not transform the next generation of social clubs so that these too focus only on sport performance. In other words, we hope that sporting NGOs do not lose their essence of being places to promote sport participation for all, including the prioritisation of poor communities.

After the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games, Brazil has had many significant challenges to face. Since then, Brazil has invested very little in sport participation. The hosting effect and the large investments made in elite athletes during the years that preceded the 2016 Games may contribute to some level of elite sporting success in a near future. However, the lack of public policies and funding to promote sport participation thereafter is likely to take its toll in the long run. Without a large base of participants (mainly among children and young people), it is very unlikely that the country will be able to sustain any success at international level.

This chapter has highlighted the lack of long-term policies for sport participation in Brazil. In the absence of these policies, it is very difficult to imagine

that the country may reap any benefit in terms of sport participation by simply hosting the 2016 Games. In general, the literature has shown that Olympic hosts have failed to take strategic actions to generate a sport participation legacy (Veal, Toohey, & Frawley, 2012; Weed et al., 2015). The same has just happened to Rio. Previous hosts (Chalip, Green, Taks, & Misener, 2017; Veal et al., 2012) and now Brazil (Rocha, 2017) have committed two big mistakes. First, the government and organisers have assumed that all legacies would happen ‘automatically’, disregarding the need for specific leveraging strategies. Second, they have not developed long-term and effective policies for sport participation. In the case of Rio 2016, we see that a large number of ineffective programmes have not filled the gap created by the lack of long-term policies.

Lack of investments in sport participation has impacts not only on future participation in international competitions but also and mainly on the population health and well-being. Research has shown very positive influences of physical activity and sport participation on mental well-being (Fox, 1999), health (Eime, Young, Harvey, Charity, & Payne, 2013), happiness (Huang & Humphreys, 2012), and satisfaction with life (McAuley et al., 2000). Girginov and Hills (2008) asserted that the modern Olympic Games can be seen as the first sport project based on sustainable development, because the Games emerged as an answer to the dissatisfaction of with exacerbated capitalism and the low levels of physical fitness of youth. Unfortunately, hosting the Games has not helped the countries to tackle low levels of exercise and sport participation of youth.

It is very unfortunate that Brazil has not taken the opportunity of hosting the Olympic Games (and the media exposition associated to it) to promote sport participation among its residents, mainly among children and young people. But, as shown in this chapter, the problem is more chronic than acute. Although previous research has shown that sport mega-events have failed to boost sport participation (Bretherton, Piggin, & Bodet, 2016; Chalip et al., 2017), the scenario in Brazil was even worse, because the country sport authorities have been evasive and have not tried to create effective sport participation policies. One reason for this could be the lack of financial resources. However, when we revisited those many programmes to support elite sport in the years preceding the Games, we understand that this is a very weak rationale. More clearly, the problem relates to values and the reality that mass sport participation was never a priority legacy of Rio 2016.

Now, the challenges for the country to promote mass sport participation are more problematic. The economic recession and political unrest continue unabated. At the same time, sport does not command the same media spotlight as it did in 2016. Consequently, even the support that was in place for elite sport has been withdrawn. For example, just recently all private sponsors (e.g., Nike, Nissan, among others) of the Brazilian Olympic Committee dropped their sponsorships from team Brazil (Folha de Sao Paulo, 2017). Only few public sponsors continue to support the national Olympic committee, but even these organisations have reduced drastically the amount of money invested in sport. In this scenario, hoping for effective programmes and strategies to actually increase sport participation has become more difficult. Not even the unproved “inspiration effect” can be used to promote some sport participation.

In this chapter, we showed that Brazil has failed to use the Rio 2016 Games to improve the levels of sport participation. We identified two main causes of this failure. First, Brazil has focused on sport policies and programmes that privileged elite sport over other dimensions of sport (leisure, educational, and grassroots). Increasing sport participation across the country was never a priority legacy inside the whole process of staging the 2016 Games. For instance, sport talent identification programmes have been proposed as a surrogate policy for sport participation programmes. Construction of facilities has been another ineffective policy to promote sport participation. Second, Brazil did not establish strategies to leverage sport participation legacy. As in previous Games, in Rio, there was a belief that simply hosting the Games would work to inspire thousands of children and youth around the country to practice sport. This belief has not turned out to be true. These two causes can explain the failure of Rio 2016 to promote sport participation. However, moving beyond leveraging strategies, we advocate that host countries must have long-term and effective policies for sport participation, in order to propose any participation legacy as a consequence of hosting sport mega-events. Our suggestion is that the Games should be the booster and not the starter of this process.

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