

# Examples of Basketball Overseas

## C.1. Introduction

- C.1.1 One of the aims of the APPG Inquiry was to better understand the relevance, scope, scale and impact of basketball-related programmes in other countries and/or jurisdictions. Research has highlighted many basketball initiatives aimed at the social challenges affecting young people in inner cities overseas and some of them are listed below. These programmes span the globe, but include many common characteristics and outcomes. It is noted that, as in the UK, basketball appears to have unique characteristics that make it particularly effective in achieving these laudable objectives around the world.
- C.1.2 It is noted as well, that, like the BBL Foundation, the NBA has a specific organisation (i.e. NBA Cares (<http://www.nba.com/cares/>)), which is the league's community outreach initiative that addresses important social issues such as education, youth and family development, and health and wellness, but it operates on a global scale. The NBA and its teams through NBA Cares, support a range of programmes, partners and initiatives that strive to positively impact children and families worldwide.
- C.1.3 Further, it is noted that basketball's equivalent of the Champions League - the EuroLeague, has a similar community programme via all of its clubs called One-Team (<http://www.euroleague.net/one-team>). This organisation has a close relationship with the Special Olympics.

## C.2. Association of Midnight Basketball League Programs

- C.2.1 Arguably the best known basketball-related community initiative and the forerunner of many similar initiatives in the UK, including SSF's Twilight Basketball and R&T's Midnight Madness programmes, is the Association of Midnight Basketball League Programs in the USA (<http://amblp.com/basketball/>). This is a non-profit organisation designed as the central administrative body for all local, regional and national Midnight Basketball activities and it is based in San Francisco. An umbrella organisation, it provides operational and financial support to local chapters or branches thereby ensuring that each efficiently meets Midnight Basketball objectives.
- C.2.2 These programmes, some of which go back 25 years, have proven to be highly effective in achieving their objectives. According to numerous testimonies, the concept has changed the lives of many thousands of young adults since the Association was founded. They are offered to vulnerable young men and women to give them the opportunity to take part in safe and structured activities during 'high risk' periods.
- C.2.3 Whilst the programmes provide young people with the opportunity to play competitive basketball, they provide far more than that. A series of workshops is key to the success of the programmes with participants given opportunities to attend and benefit greatly from workshops on the following:
- Interviewing techniques;
  - Employment opportunities;
  - Inter-personal relationships;
  - Alcohol and drug abuse;
  - Sexually transmitted diseases;
  - Conflict resolution;
  - Knowing the law, knowing your rights;
  - Higher education;
  - Applying for college financial aid;
  - Becoming involved in the general educational development process; and
  - Adult education.
- C.2.4 The programmes work closely with local social service agencies, community colleges and health departments on some or all of these areas.
- C.2.5 The programmes claim to achieve the desired results because:
- The 4-hour period scheduled for the programmes is between 10pm and 2am which is when temptations towards crime and drug activity are at their greatest;

- The front-end commitment of youths to the programmes and the discipline/reward system provide participants with a sense of pride and accomplishment;
- The wide variety of workshops and scholarship opportunities encourages youths to reflect on both their current life situations and future vocational goals;
- The efforts of volunteer adults and financial and in-hand contributions from businesses make the programmes work;
- Some part-time and full-time entry-level employment is provided for the participants in the communities in which they live;
- Interaction with prominent law enforcement authorities, businesses and community leaders gives the participants respect for individuals and fosters better mutual understanding;
- Basketball is the sport of choice for the target population;
- Basketball is an activity in which both individual talent and group teamwork is necessary to achieve the desired results;
- A 'draft' process is used to form teams from the communities in which they live and spreads talent across all teams to ensure the maximum degree of competition within each league;
- The mandatory use of all players in each game and required man-to-man defence ensures a high degree of participation and physical activity;
- The 1:6 ratio of adults to youth and the fact that all coaches are community leaders combine to communicate a sense of commitment to participants; and
- Recreational programmes for post-high school youths begin at a time of rapid and often difficult transition to education and employment continues all year and affords them an opportunity to learn.

C.2.6 These programmes originally had their struggles in the USA, principally in gaining financial support. In the early days, because it was believed that voters preferred to see their taxes being used to build more prison cells. Cash for these preventative schemes had to come from private donations and corporate sponsorship. Washington DC, for example, took a lot of convincing that basketball could have a direct effect on crime rates, but the hard work and dedication of thousands of volunteers and participants was translated into plummeting crime rates in more than 60 US towns and cities - some areas saw reductions of 70%.

### C.3. Midnight Basketball programme in Milan

C.3.1 In August 2012, an impact survey of 200 participants in the Midnight Basketball programme in Milan, Italy undertaken by Ecorys and the Center for Research on Sustainability and Value; and Università Bocconi, supplemented by qualitative evidence gathered by university researchers, recorded the following for the previous 12 months:

- Midnight Basketball resulted in around 24 crimes being avoided, delivering €191,489 (£153,191) worth of savings to society;
- Overall, the educational and employment impacts of Midnight Basketball are valued at €185,467 (£148,374), particularly positive given the high rates of those not in employment, education or training in Italy;
- An estimate of around 80% of participants would not have found similar activity in the area, which suggests that Midnight Basketball is a particularly well targeted project;
- Five 16 year olds had been helped into further education, and nine 16 year olds into a job;
- There were 4,256 extra sessions of physical activity (of at least 30 minutes) participation thanks to Midnight Basketball. This equates to a total of one additional year of (quality adjusted) life expectancy gained, with a value of €23,772 (£19,018);
- There were smaller positive impacts in terms of school truancy and exclusions;
- Overall it is estimated that Midnight Basketball delivered at least €316,902 (£253,522) of additional social benefit, and with the cost of the project running at €56,180, this delivered a benefit to cost ratio of €5.64 for every €1 invested.

### C.4. Midnight Basketball Australia

C.4.1 Midnight Basketball Australia ["MBA"] (<http://www.midnightbasketball.org.au/Pages/Home.aspx>) is a national social inclusion programme to help 'at risk' youth identify and embrace positive opportunities. The first MBA programme was in Redfern, Sydney in 2007 and due to its success the programme now runs across the country.

C.4.2 MBA provides a dinner, compulsory life skills workshops and tournament basketball games for youths aged 12 to 18 years in stadia on Friday or Saturday nights from 7.30pm until midnight, followed by a bus home, providing a safe and motivating environment.

- C.4.3 MBA offers an intervention that: contributes to community and individual capacity building; engages a diverse social mix of young people in its programmes; and is sustainable over time. In meeting these aims MBA believes it will make a positive contribution to:
- providing young people with a safe, healthy and positive environment at times when they may be vulnerable to harmful and anti-social behaviour;
  - combating drug, alcohol and other physical abuse by young people;
  - supporting the learning needs of young people and providing them with encouragement to participate in mainstream society and their local community;
  - providing positive role models and reinforcing the importance of self esteem among young people; and
  - diverting young people in areas of need from the risk of anti-social and criminal behaviour.
- C.4.4 MBA says that the most common question asked is “Why basketball?” The answer is that basketball is a fast and inclusionary game. While the actual sport is not important per se, basketball is actually the only sport that:
- caters for all MBA requirements and fits with MBA’s inclusionary culture;
  - caters to all areas of sporting ability (some sports require a high level of skill which would exclude some players);
  - is a magnet to both genders and ages;
  - provides great mentoring opportunities (the older players mentor the younger players in their team);
  - is played on basketball courts (which are small enough to house indoors); and
  - is held inside, which is important from a safety and climate perspective. Given that between 60 and 80 youths are being looked after until midnight, this is important to creating a happy, high energy and safe environment.
- C.4.5 MBA says that the second most common question asked is “Why midnight?” The answer is that in MBA’s experience youth participants of midnight basketball go home exhausted and happy, and go to sleep and this is a benefit to all. If the programme was held to finish earlier in the evening the youths may end up back out on the streets, benefiting no one.

#### **C.5. Inner City Players in Portland, Oregon**

- C.5.1 Inner City Players [“ICP”] was established in Portland, Oregon in 1997. The mission was simple: *“Use the game of basketball as a motivational vehicle for inner city youth to dream!”* Through this vision, programme founder, Canaan Chatman and his staff practice a comprehensive approach to student athlete development, through their ‘Challenge and Encourage’ techniques. From the beginning of their programming in 1997, ICP claims a 98% high school completion rate, with over 200 student athletes attending college institutions.

#### **C.6. Basic Ball Philly**

- C.6.1 Basic Ball Philly is a youth basketball program in Philadelphia. The primary focus is to take young students from at-risk, low income areas and give them a positive outlet. Continued basketball development has been the driver in keeping these young men active and out of trouble and also to improve their classroom grades. Currently, all financial responsibilities fall on the parents (i.e. mostly single mothers) and the two coaches, but it is going to take community assistance to secure a permanent playing facility and achieve the planned expansion of the programme.

#### **C.7. Winnipeg's Power of Sport for Kids Programme**

- C.7.1 25 teenage girls from Winnipeg's inner-city have taken to the basketball circuit with new coordinated uniforms, jerseys, jackets, duffle bags, basketball shoes and basketballs, thanks to a generous donation by The Forzani Group, which supports the Power of Sport for Kids programme.
- C.7.2 The programme endeavours to bring fun, sport and exercise to deserving children. The reality is that almost 900,000 children in Canada are living beneath the poverty line. The struggles they have to face on a daily basis are harder than many Canadian adults will ever have to face; these children simply don't have the resources to engage in play.

#### **C.8. Windy City (Chicago) Hoops Inner-City Basketball Programme**

- C.8.1 Mayor Rahm Emanuel, his basketball friend Isiah Thomas, a range of sponsors and some charitable Chicago citizens have taken basketball to those who so desperately need it – the poor, bored, scared and talented youth of the inner city.
- C.8.2 The Windy City Hoops programme features open gyms and 'hoops' leagues on Friday and Saturday nights at 10 city parks across Chicago. In addition, Nike has teamed up with the Chicago Park District to offer free summer basketball clinics in neighbourhoods throughout the city. More than 1,000 children aged 9 to 18 have already joined the programmes, which provide competition, referees, mentors and camaraderie, all in a safe place.
- C.8.3 Isiah Thomas, an impoverished Chicago child who went on to become a 12-time NBA All-Star and a Basketball Hall of Fame member, recently earned his Masters Degree in Education from the University of California-Berkeley, and this project is close to his heart. He feels so fortunate to have had great mentors when he was growing up and he is compelled to give a lot back to the sport. He firmly believes *"Basketball is a game that can bring a community together. It can't change the world, but it can be the catalyst for so much."* Emanuel and Thomas know that *"There are thousands of salvageable lives and tens of thousands of decent, desirous children who no longer can be left to sink alone into crime, drugs and despair, and safe, joyful play is a start. The real truth is, just because you are poor does not mean that you cannot be educated."*

### C.9. Greater Columbus Basketball Legends Association

- C.9.1 The Ohio State men's basketball teams appeared in three consecutive national championship games from 1960 to 1962. Those 'Buckeyes' had a collective grade-point average of around 3.5. Among them were eight young men from Columbus, including the first African-American recruits at the school. Some of them played professional basketball, a few of them went into basketball coaching, but all went on to successful careers in different walks of life.
- C.9.2 Their story is not unique. Basketball has been an inner-city vehicle in Columbus, Ohio since the sport was introduced, at the local YMCA, in the 1890s. It has been used, as often as not, as a building block for success and it will continue to be.
- C.9.3 The Greater Columbus Basketball Legends Association was formed by black men who had struggles, who got through school, who went on to college and who had successful careers. The goal of the Association is to highlight off-court character as much as prowess on the basketball court and it firmly believes that basketball can be a positive vision to help young people, to show them that there is a path and that they can be a success.

### C.10. Inner City Education Foundation in Los Angeles

- C.10.1 Former sports star Brian Taylor, who was a top basketball player at Princeton University and later played professionally in the NBA, is now an administrator with a group of rigorous schools for minority students in Los Angeles. Taylor tells his students that athletics and study are two sides of the same coin. He says, *"I learned while playing basketball at Princeton University that both take hard work and perseverance."*
- C.10.2 After 10 years in professional sports, he finished his degree, and recognised that he had to be involved in education. He worked in Los Angeles as an administrator and basketball coach at an exclusive private school, but he thought that he could make a difference in the inner city, where he believes that minority students often drop out and waste their talent. The graduation rate for schools in many big American cities, including Los Angeles, is less than 50%.
- C.10.3 Michael Piscal founded the Inner City Education Foundation ["ICEF"] in 1994, and Taylor joined him. He believes that students value sport and so he has taken their focus on winning and applied it to academic studies. Today, ICEF runs 15 rigorous college preparatory schools.
- C.10.4 Their experience shows that students work as hard in class as they do on the basketball court and they are succeeding. School test scores are among the highest in the state for African American students, and Taylor says *"Students are finishing school and graduating. We're very proud that of our first three graduating classes, 100% of our kids have not only graduated, but have also enrolled in top colleges and universities in the US."*
- C.10.5 Taylor believes that sports and study together build character and he is also involved in a programme for coaches to teach adolescent boys to respect young women. The programme is called Coaching Boys into Men, and Taylor says *"It is another example of how sports can be used to teach bigger lessons. Our schools adhere to high standards for personal conduct."*

### **C.11. 'H3 Cincy' Teen-Police Basketball Initiative**

- C.11.1 In Springfield, Ohio, students from the 'Boys Hope-Girls Hope of Greater Cincinnati' programme have started a new 'H3 Cincy' basketball initiative aimed at getting teens off the street and onto the basketball court. The three Hs stand for hoops, heart and hope. Students collaborate with the Cincinnati Police department for a 10-week educational and basketball programme.
- C.11.2 Police Chief Jeff Blackwell said, *"What we do is narrow that disconnect between youth and police officers and in inner city communities, not just in Cincinnati, but all over - that rift is really wide. I am excited to help shape the future of the youth for the better. The 10-week sessions are far more than basketball. We have financial literacy classes; conflict resolution (which we realise is hugely important to young people), college preparedness and a whole host of things."*

### **C.12. Ray Neblett Inner City Basketball Camp**

- C.12.1 Ray Neblett couldn't save himself. That is what drives him to save as many of the inner-city youth in Richmond, Virginia as he can; and he is trying to do it through basketball. Neblett, a point guard at Virginia Union University in the 1980s, initially hosted more than 300 youth from low income local communities free-of-charge at the Ray Neblett Inner City Basketball Camp. But for those five days, basketball skills were secondary to the life lessons that Neblett and others imparted. Neblett says, *"This camp is about transforming the inner city by transforming the inner man that is in our kids. Our kids deserve quality and we try to provide that for them."*
- C.12.2 Neblett is dedicated to these youngsters and wants to share with them the skills to avoid life's 'bear traps'. He can speak from first-hand experience; he got caught in one. Neblett spent 14 years in prison on an armed robbery conviction and he reflects on the case and said *"It helped me get myself together."* Morrissey, his prosecutor, now supports Neblett and says, *"Whatever he does on the court pales in comparison to the education he's giving these kids on life choices."*
- C.12.3 Neblett shows the youngsters that there is something beyond their block and their neighbourhood and he wants the community leaders to see the positive influence his camp has on inner-city youth. Neblett says that his programme allows the youth to see that people do care about them. He also teaches them to be respectful of others.

### **C.13. Street X Games 'Basketball 4 life' project**

- C.13.1 Street X Games is a non-profit organisation that uses basketball and community programmes to prevent at-risk behaviour. The programmes develop basketball, art and life skills in order to support at-risk young people between the ages 6 and 18.
- C.13.2 The 3 Street X Games programmes operate in Jinja, Uganda and the project is spearheaded by 'Basketball 4 life', a life-skills project that teaches 50 children how to play basketball and advises them of the dangers of drug use and encourages them to lead a healthy drug free lifestyle.

### **C.14. Laureus Sport for Good Foundation**

- C.14.1 Laureus comprises the Laureus World Sports Academy, the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation ["LSGF"] and the Laureus World Sports Awards, which collectively harness the power of sport, including basketball, to promote social change and celebrate sporting excellence.
- C.14.2 LSGF raises funds to provide financial and practical support to more than 140 projects which use the power of sport to provide coaching and education to young people in some of the most challenging or deprived environments around the world.
- C.14.3 LSGF's goal is to help young people overcome the limitations imposed by challenging social issues including poverty, homelessness, war, violence, drug abuse, discrimination and AIDS. To do this Laureus supports and assists a worldwide programme of sports related community projects that have been working to educate children, protect the vulnerable from illness and even bring people from divided communities together in friendship for more than ten years.
- C.14.4 Laureus believes that sport, including basketball, can change the world for the better and the LSGF helps to make this happen in four ways: funding children's community sports projects; offering training to charities in how to use Sport for Good; giving support in how to measure the change that individual projects are making in their communities; and opening up projects to a global network of other charities using sport to change the world.

### **Twinned Peace Basketball Schools for Girls**

- C.14.5 One example of a Laureus basketball project is the Twinned Peace Basketball Schools for Girls ["TWPBSG"] programme. Founded by Nobel Peace Laureate, Shimon Peres, the Peres Centre brings together girls to play basketball in mixed teams composed of both Israelis and Palestinians. Basketball has been selected because it is such a popular sport with the girls. The TWPBSG are located in various Palestinian communities, such as Jericho and Issawiyya, as well as Israeli communities including Sderot and Ofakim. The project works toward establishing an infrastructure of peace for the people of Israel and Palestine.
- C.14.6 The schools run individual, but parallel, programmes in which the girls learn about basketball skills, fitness, teamwork and discipline. They are then brought together regularly to play basketball together in mixed teams. This breaks down stereotypes, builds self-confidence, improves physical skills, teaches empathy and offers a safe and meaningful space for dialogue and interaction with the 'other side'. The programme also provides them with peace education classes and educational support. They are expected to maintain a certain academic level at school in order to participate in the programme.
- C.14.7 Over 700 Israeli and Palestinian girls have participated in the TWPBSG project to date, making an impact not only on the mindsets of the girls themselves, but on their friends, families and whole communities. It has been seen time and again how friendships formed during the project have continued outside of the project framework and allowed the girls to view the 'other side' as friends and equals rather than unknown enemies.
- C.14.8 TWPBSG has challenged the stereotype, enabling the girls to participate in sporting activities, something they would likely otherwise not have the chance to do, while allowing them to develop as strong, independent women and, uniquely, interact and get to know girls on the other side of the border. The effects that have been seen on the girls, their families and their entire communities as a result of this simple concept have been truly amazing.

#### **Körbe für Köln**

- C.14.9 Another example of a Laureus basketball project is Körbe für Köln, which translates to 'Baskets for Cologne', and uses sport as the means to engage deprived youth in this German city and offers them a route to counselling sessions and vocational advice and support. Körbe für Köln attracts the target group by means of basketball, using the attractive streetball variant; indoor-basketball in a sheltered space for girls; and indoor-wheelchair-basketball.

#### **C.15. PeacePlayers International - Northern Ireland**

- C.15.1 PeacePlayers International is a non-profit organisation that brings children from communities in conflict together to play basketball. Its coaches and mentors work year round to unite, educate and inspire young people to create a more peaceful world.
- C.15.2 PeacePlayers International - Northern Ireland ["PPI-NI"] is an independently registered cross-community peace building charity in Northern Ireland that uses sport, in particular, basketball, to unite and educate young people from Protestant and Catholic communities.
- C.15.3 By regularly competing together in mixed teams, children from these historically divided groups discover common ground and forge new friendships, while a mix of local and international facilitators help them adjust to the complexities that accompany growing up in a post-conflict society. In its last programmatic year, PPI-NI worked with roughly 2,000 participants, while providing services to eight of the ten most disadvantaged communities in Northern Ireland according to the Northern Ireland Statistic and Research Agency.
- C.15.4 A programme participant, Ann Murphy, said, *"At the start [playing together] wasn't weird, but it was different because we would never have gotten the opportunity to go out and meet Protestants and be friends with them."* Another participant, Aoife Doherty, said, *"When you get to know your teammates, it doesn't really matter what their religion is."*

#### **Primary School Twinning**

- C.15.5 Entire classes of children aged 7 to 11 from neighbouring controlled (predominantly Protestant) and maintained (predominantly Catholic) schools come together for basketball and community relations sessions in mixed groups. PPI-NI works with 20 schools in Belfast, 4 in Lurgan, and 6 schools in Ballymena.

#### **Cross Community Interface League - Junior and Senior Belfast Interface League**

C.15.6 This is an evening, after school and residential programme for 9 to 17 year-olds that builds upon the primary school curriculum and engages young people in 'hubs' in north, south, east and west Belfast providing cross community basketball training, matches, and community relations discussions.

## **C.16. PeacePlayers-Cyprus**

- C.16.1 Each summer, in the mountain town of Agros, 64 Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youths spend a week living together, playing basketball, and building new friendships at the PeacePlayers-Cyprus basketball camp. Since the end of an inter-ethnic war in 1974, Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus have been physically separated by the UN-administered 'Green Zone' stretching from one side of the island to the other. Most youths have no opportunities to interact with children from the other community, instead relying on propaganda and misinformation that spread fear and hate.
- C.16.2 By spending an entire week learning and playing together, these young people have made tremendous progress in breaking down stereotypes and building real friendships. *"We came here knowing little of each other and we have in these few days gained tremendous experiences, new friendships and a strong belief we can make things happen!"* said a young female participant.
- C.16.3 Each day, PeacePlayers staff and guest basketball coaches lead the participants through a host of special activities that included basketball skills training and competitive matches as well as film making, trivia games, conflict resolution seminars and other team building exercises. Participant, Evripidis Kardamilas, said, *"In the beginning I participated for the basketball, but then I made friends with the Turkish-Cypriots. Now we play and we all have fun together."*
- C.16.4 This year the camp also featured young coaches in training from PeacePlayers-Cyprus' Leadership Development Program ["LDP"]. The LDP is made up of thirty 15 to 18 year-olds who are graduates of the youth programmes and receive additional training to become basketball coaches and community leaders themselves. After spending the past year developing their communication and leadership skills both on and off the court, eight LDP participants were chosen to be assistant coaches for the camp. Each of the young leaders took on great responsibilities both on and off the court, learning what it takes to become good leaders and role models.
- C.16.5 During the camp, participants also attended conflict resolution sessions led by two very well-known Cypriots working within the field of peace building, Nicos Anastasiou and Alexis Lyras. Nicos led participants through an activity that allowed them to explore their community's stereotypes, as well as how they have changed their own personal perceptions through their new friendships; while Professor Lyras helped the participants realise that it is within their power to utilise the positive power of sport to create peace.
- C.16.6 The 'PeacePlayers Basketball Camp' was supported by the US Embassy, LSGF and the Brooklyn Nets. Ambassador John Koenig from the US Embassy in Nicosia said, *"I am so impressed that I pledge to do my best to support this initiative during the upcoming year, despite the dire cutbacks been made at the Embassy. By focusing on the game of basketball and the values of sportsmanship, the youths learn to break down stereotypes to contribute to an environment whereby children who play together can learn to live together."*

## **C.17. PeacePlayers International - Middle East**

- C.17.1 The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the most persistent and destructive in modern history. Children from both backgrounds, growing up within this tragic environment, have frequently been left afraid and distrustful of each other. Working to tackle such tension between communities, PeacePlayers International Middle East ["PPI-ME"] brings Israeli and Palestinian children together onto the safe zone of the basketball court.
- C.17.2 Achieving the goals comes down to a question of identity. Before children start with PPI-ME, they often only think of themselves as either Israeli or Palestinian. To tackle the prejudices built up over years of social tension between these groups, the basketball court offers a unique place where a shared identity is achieved: team-mates.
- C.17.3 Built in conjunction with the Arbinger Institute, the peace building curriculum offers a set of on and off the basketball court lessons for the children of both communities to help understand why tension between them has come about and how it can be overcome.

- C.17.4 PPI-ME has used basketball to bring together 5,500 children from both Israeli and Palestinian backgrounds and helped them to form positive relationships and even long-lasting friendships.
- C.17.5 Yael Gur, Project Manager of 'A New Way in Israel', said, *"We typically use activities such as art and drama to bridge divides between the youth. We always knew that sport had the potential to do the same, but PPI-ME's basketball day went way above and beyond..."*

#### **C.18. PeacePlayers - South Africa**

- C.18.1 29 PeacePlayers South Africa teams will participate in the 2014 Primary School Programme ["PSP"], which has begun to take shape, and the four teams set to re-launch the LDP for high school players are ready to take to the basketball court.
- C.18.2 Coaches have been busy conducting try-outs for 6th and 7th grade boys and girls at 15 primary schools around the Durban area. Interest in the programme is very high, with some schools having more than 100 children trying-out for just 24 spots - 12 boys and 12 girls. There are many familiar faces, but also a huge number of new participants looking to replace last year's 7th graders who have moved on to high school this year.
- C.18.3 The PSP focuses on basketball fundamentals while promoting character-building traits such as self-confidence, self-discipline, and goal-setting. It is hoped that all of the PSP participants finish the year better equipped to make positive decisions in their lives, which isn't always easy in their home communities that are often filled with obstacles, dangers, and bad influences.
- C.18.4 While try-outs are being conducted in primary schools, the staff have also been at high schools in the townships of Umlazi and Lamontville to recruit children for the LDP. There will be a boys' and a girls' team in each township and the first round of try-outs has begun. The LDP participants are challenged to not only make positive decisions in their own lives, but to become a positive influence on others in their community.
- C.18.5 Jennifer Sonasundrum, Principal, Merry Hill Primary School, South Africa, said, *"Basketball has added a new dimension to our sporting activities. Of course, it improves coordination and also improves communication between the kids themselves. It's wonderful that PPI has become..."* A participant, Geina Mdungo, said, *"I was scared to death at first. But by the end of the match, I realised we were all the same."*