



## Sport against poverty

The **Olympic Committee of Saudi Arabia** and the office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) decided to prepare a brochure illustrating Saudi Arabia's activities against poverty and its contribution to developing countries. This brochure was distributed on the occasion of the Intercontinental Football Championships held in Riyadh from 12 to 21 December 1997. It was also agreed that the emblem of the United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) would be printed on tickets for the championships and on a billboard at the edge of the field.

The **Chinese Olympic Committee** has launched a number of actions to assist the most disadvantaged population groups in various regions. In September 1997, two primary schools - the construction of which was financed by the NOC - were inaugurated in the district of Fanzhi in Shanxi Province. As a result of this project, more than 300 children will have the facilities they need to begin their schooling. A primary school has also been opened for the first time in the village of Xigou in the same province under the patronage of the Chinese Cycling Association. In addition, the Beijing National Olympic Training Centre has continued its initiative against poverty launched in 1995 with a donation of sports equipment and office supplies to the city of Xiaobaiyu in the Fanzhi district.

In the context of the Week for the Eradication of Poverty proclaimed by the United Nations from 17 to 24 October and celebrated every year throughout the world, the **Georgian National Olympic Committee** organized a Race

against Poverty with the support of the local UNDP office and the marathon club of Tbilissi. Some 70 runners from local sports circles as well as international organizations and embassies took part in a marathon, from which the ticket sale proceeds were donated in their entirety to an orphanage in Dzegvi.

The **National Olympic Committee of Burkina Faso** and the local UNDP office organized sports events on 18 October in which some 200 children from poor families in the city of Ouagadougou took part. Several commercial partners supported the initiative and supplied prizes for all the participants. This initiative was also supported by the Ouagadougou municipality, which is a member of the World Alliance of Cities Against Poverty.

The **Cuban Olympic Committee** and the UNDP office organized on 24 October 1997 an information day on the theme of the eradication of poverty in which the National Institute of Sport, Physical Education and Recreation (INDER), many high-level Cuban athletes, including some Olympic medalists, as well as coaches and the national press took part. A communiqué was distributed in all the national high-level training centres in order to raise awareness among athletes.

A Sports Activities for the Disabled Day was organized by the **Ethiopian Olympic Committee** and the local UNDP office in cooperation with the Disabled Sports Federation, the Department for Rehabilitation and the Ethiopian Association for the Disabled. The day was organized around a wheelchair

basketball match for which the players had trained for several months with the support of a British coach. Several wheelchairs were provided by English donors.

The International Eradication of Poverty Day was celebrated in **Indonesia** with the appointment of Rudy Hartono, world badminton champion and winner of the All-England badminton championship for the eighth consecutive time, as a goodwill ambassador in the fight against poverty.

The **Olympic Council of Malaysia** and the UNDP office in Kuala Lumpur again cooperated in support of the promotion of sport for the most disadvantaged sectors of the population by donating MR 75,000 to the Malaysian Paralympic Association.

A Run for the eradication of poverty was organized in the **Maldives** on 18 October 1997 in cooperation with the local UNDP office. Some 400 people took part in the event.

More than 2,500 children from the poor districts of the city of Nouakchott were able to take part in a football tournament organized by the **Mauritanian Olympic Committee** and the UNDP with the support of the ministry for civil service, labour, youth and sports, the ministry of education and the regional directorate of basic education as well as the municipalities of Nouakchott, Ryad and Arafat. The National Bank of Mauritania also gave its support to this Day by donating T-shirts bearing a message about the eradication of poverty.

---

On 23 October 1997, Mauritanian athletes representing all the Olympic disciplines signed the Olympic Athletes' Appeal against Poverty and presented it to the president of the republic in the presence of the president of the Mauritius Olympic Committee and the UNDP permanent representative. The ceremony was given local press and television coverage.

---

**The Swaziland National Olympic Committee** helped to arrange a national essay competition for primary and secondary school children on the

theme "What I would do to eliminate poverty in my village if I were a decision-maker". The NOC presented the prizes to the winners in each category at a ceremony held on 17 October 1997. At the event held to mark the commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the NOC on 18 October, Swaziland's athletes presented the Olympic Athletes' Appeal against Poverty to the prime minister.

---

The UNDP office in **Zambia** organized a Walk against Poverty to commemo-

rate the International Eradication of Poverty Day. More than 5,000 people, among them the sports community and representatives of the ministry of youth and sports, took part in the event. The walk ended at the Woodlands stadium with a presentation of the campaign against poverty in which various families concerned told of their experiences. The president of the Zambian National Football Association read out the Athletes' Appeal against Poverty, which had been signed by the national football team.