

An evaluation of the accomplishments of the International Athletics Foundation over the past 25 years and recommendations for future emphases

November 1, 2012

The International Athletics Foundation was formally established by the IAAF in November 1986 following a Ministerial Decree by the Prime Minister of Monaco. The Foundation commenced operations with an initial capital grant of US\$ 20 million.

The Foundation's primary mission is to charitably assist the International Association of Athletics Federations -- the world governing body for track and field, road running, race walking, cross country running and mountain running -- and its affiliated national governing bodies in perpetuating the development and promotion of athletics worldwide.

Purposes:

The purposes of the Foundation are to help the IAAF and its MFs to encourage and promote athletics throughout the world¹ in any possible way, including to

- Encourage **courses, seminars and congresses** in such countries as the IAF judges appropriate;
- Deal with **publications and magazines**;
- Organize **exhibitions** of a social, scientific and technical nature;
- **Grant financial assistance** and – as a general rule, take any action deemed necessary, without any exception – in **order to help Athletics Federations, as well as the most deserving athletes**;
- **Encourage young people to athletics**;
- Help individuals and associations to design and build **sports and track facilities**.

Accomplishments:

During the past 25 years, the Foundation has expended over US\$30 million on a host of projects that have been brought to the attention, and received the approval of its governing body. The major area of expenditure has been the funding of an annual Gala (US\$16 million, 54.6% of total) at which the leading athletes of the

¹ This closely aligns with the IAAF's objective "to foster and support the worldwide development of athletics and the dissemination of technical, medical, logistical, statistical, financial or other information which achieves this aim to its Members and Area Associations." Also that of promoting "the sport of Athletics and its ethical values as an educational subject and life affirming and life enhancing activity".

year are designated and recognized and which serves as the culmination of the IAAF's annual program of major athletics competitions. The activity, always presided over by the Foundation's Honorary President, His Serene Highness Prince Albert of Monaco, is anxiously looked forward to by the major athletes, their coaches and sponsors as a fitting recognition and reward for the talents they have displayed and the contribution they have made to the world-wide exposure of our sport throughout the year.

FOUNDATION PROJECTS, BY CATEGORY
Expenditures through 2012

	USD	%
Anti Doping	926,102	3,05
Books	1,428,482	4,71
Competitions	1,723,798	5,68
Education	737,521	2,43
Foundation activities	94,356	0,31
Gala	16,569,943	54,64
IAAF	2,097,501	6,92
Research	727,301	2,40
Seminars & Workshops	2,105,886	6,94
Tracks & Techn. Equipt	3,917,693	12,92
Total	30,328,259	100,00

The other mandated purposes of the Foundation have received generous support from the Foundation, to wit:

- Courses, seminars and congresses. Over two million dollars have been contributed by the Foundation to fund or contribute to the costs of a total of 43 seminars and workshops which have been conducted during the past quarter of a century. The principal areas of expenditure have been for symposiums on doping, sport and law, women and gender issues and development along with a host of other miscellaneous areas of interest.
- Publications and magazines. The Foundation has underwritten the publication of over 56 books in the areas of education, statistics, development, doping among others that have contributed to the expansion of the knowledge and awareness of the critical areas of our sport by the worldwide community represented by our membership and related parties. A total of US\$1.4 million has been spent in this area.
- Exhibitions of a social, scientific and technical nature. We have not identified any specific expenditure in this area.
- Financial assistance to help Athletics Federations as well as the most deserving athletes. Scholarships (too few) have been extended and we have

funded a host of youth related activities. These are included under the general category of “education” where we have spent US\$737,521. On the other hand, US\$ 4 million has responded to MFs requests for assistance in the financing of competition and training facilities (tracks and equipment).

- Introduce young people to athletics. During the period the Foundation has made grants to support regional youth championships, sponsored training materials specifically designed for aspiring young athletes and financed seminars for youngsters, etc.
- Assist in the design and building of sports and track facilities. Over the last several years, increasing attention has been paid to this area as more and more of the Member Federations affiliated to the IAAF have sought the Foundation’s assistance in encouraging their governments to construct stadiums and all-weather running surfaces (tracks). The assistance made available by the Foundation has often been coupled with additional support from the IAAF and occasionally from the IOC, to facilitate the construction of certified synthetic surfaces in many of our less developed countries. Along with grants for accompanying technical equipment, the Foundation has expended to date US\$3.9 million for this purpose and currently has another US\$ 470.000 committed to on-going projects which should be completed within the next two years. This has been the second largest area of expenditures by the Foundation.

Other areas of expenditure include:

- Research. The Foundation has committed US\$ 727,031 to a great variety of research projects which have contributed to expanding our knowledge and comprehension of various aspects of human physiology and behavior which contribute to enhancing the performance of athletes. These have included biomedical research projects conducted at several of our world championships.
- Doping. This has been accompanied by an investment of US\$926,000 in doping related research activities which similarly contribute to enhancing athletes’ awareness of the substances that would prove harmful to their long-term health and growth while emphasizing the aspects of “fair play” which are inherent in a drug-free competitive environment.
- Grants to the IAAF. In direct support of the IAAF, the Foundation made sizeable grants to facilitate the initial outfitting of the IAAF offices in Monaco as well as the celebration of the Federation’s 75th and 90th anniversaries. The sums expended have amounted to over two million dollars (6.9% of total expenditures throughout the period).
- Competition. The Foundation has made sizeable contributions to the undertaking of several significant competitions over the period, including the

annual Monaco marathon (1997-2008) and the Nebiolo Memorial meet in Torino (2002-2012) as well as the Millennium Marathon held in Rome in 2000 under the patronage of the Pope. Total financial commitments have amounted to US\$1,723,798.

Looking forward:

In evaluating the Foundation's performance over the recent past and charting a course for the immediate future, it seems convenient to examine the IAAF's stated goals for the period.

Ten years ago, the IAAF adopted a plan for the decade ahead, i.e., through 2012, which highlighted several objectives:

- *Event objective*
To improve the quality and appeal of Athletics events
- *Participation objectives*
To provide all people with the greatest opportunities to participate in Athletics
To make Athletics the world-wide number one participatory sport in schools
- *Tools objectives*
To increase the level of competence in the world of Athletics
To improve access to Athletics facilities and equipment for all
- *Public objective*
To increase the recognition of the sport of Athletics
- *Media objective*
To increase the quality and quantity of media coverage of Athletics
- *Partners objective*
To ensure the long term financial security of the sport of Athletics

As the decade comes to a close, it may serve us well to explore to what extent the Foundation's activities have contributed to the advancement of these objectives.

A cursory review would reveal that the Foundation has made contributions – large or small – in each of these areas. Our most significant contributions have been (1) our efforts to contribute to increasing the recognition of the sport of Athletics through our sponsorship of the annual Gala and (2) our contribution to improving access to Athletics facilities and equipment (76 projects) by underwriting the acquisition of these by over 50 of our Members.

With regards to the Gala, there is legitimate concern that we have not maximized the value of the event since, despite the significant investment we have made and the contributions of our partners – Mondo, CMB and in the past Coca Cola and ISL --

the dissemination of the event has been increasingly less visible in the public media.²

Whereas our contribution in these two areas has been significant, there are additional opportunities for further enhancing these efforts and for developing new ones that will concur more closely with the stated objectives of the Athletics community as expressed by the IAAF.

Recommendations

1. **Enhancing the Athletics Gala.** There was a general consensus that we should aggressively seek additional visibility for the Gala which would allow us to make this a truly valuable media event. It was noted that we were already constrained as to the support that the Foundation can meaningfully offer (currently capped at 40% of our annual net income); that any search for additional sponsorship must protect both the Foundation's traditional supporters (Mondo and CMB) as well as the IAAF sponsors and that to date there has been limited interest by the major broadcasters in transmitting our event.

The challenge is to market the Gala to potential sponsors who would make a long-term commitment to partner with us in a potentially valuable media event. This will require a concerted effort by all involved which would enhance rather than detract from the areas currently supported by the IAAF's (and the Foundation's) established sponsors.

It was concluded that a determination should be postponed until after we had had an opportunity to examine the success of the 2012 Anniversary Gala in Barcelona which will commemorate a unique historical moment and count with a markedly larger budget. At that time a decision should be made as to (1) which non-traditional sponsors should be sought, (2) whether the event can be successfully marketed, possibly as individual TV segments to the established new media and (3) whether we should consider out-sourcing the production of the Gala to an external (private) entity.

2. **At least one synthetic track in each Member Federation.** Over the past several years, our investments have contributed to the World Athletics Plan's stated goal of having "*at least one synthetic track [and appropriate equipment] in each Member Federation for use by all the Athletics community.*" In

² Throughout the years, the interest of the TV networks in broadcasting the Gala, even when offered free of charge, has diminished. In the last year, only three stations (Cyprus, Turkey and New Zealand) are reported to have broadcast delayed highlights of the event

targeting Members that do not have synthetic tracks, we have determined, as a policy, that not all our Members can indeed utilize or, for that matter, justify such modern surfaces and have limited our contribution to MFs with more than 100,000 inhabitants. The Federation has identified nineteen such members.³

Well-kept grass tracks (such as that requested by Cook Islands) may in many instances be more appropriate for many of our smaller members.

Our current grant is capped at US\$60,000 which, at the discretion of the President of the IAAF, may be matched by a US\$100,000 grant from the IAAF.

- (a) We should continue to seek support for a matching contribution from the IOC (and its affiliated fund, Olympic Solidarity), which requires a formal request from the relevant NOC. Not very many of these grants have been made thus far, but we should take all possible measure to accelerate the bureaucratic process which is involved. Combined with the cooperation of Mondo – which has been generously forthcoming in the past – this could lead to a marked increase in the number of countries attaining this laudatory benchmark of progress.
- (b) It was noted that in several instances, the local governments might need additional financial support to prepare the necessary base for the running surface, in which instance – once the country's commitment and limitations are duly documented – the request to the IOC should incorporate this funding.
- (c) In addition, the Foundation should continue to support small grants to provide equipment for existing or prospective tracks (currently capped at US\$30,000).
- (d) We should ideally monitor the utilization and maintenance of the surfaces funded by the Foundation. In this respect, we should assure that the beneficiaries are provided with the appropriate maintenance manuals and that Members are urged to actively involve themselves in the preservation of this resource.

Whereas there may be skepticism as to how effective such oversight might be, once we have disbursed the funding, we should nevertheless strive to create an awareness of the need to adequately conserve and preserve the donated facilities in order to assure the continued development and growth of the sport within the respective countries.

³ See annexed tabulation provided by Pierre Weiss of Countries with Zero Synthetic Track as of June 2012.

3. Research. There are a number of areas of our sport which require additional research and investigation in order to secure the necessary improvements in the practice and presentation of our events. To date, we have been presented with relatively few such proposals. It was noted that much of the research in competition and officiating implements and equipment is conducted by the manufacturers and then submitted for evaluation by our Technical Committee.

(a) It was agreed that we should include the “**pursuit of research and investigation into areas of particular concern to the sport of Athletics**” within the purposes of the Foundation. Such an amendment should be proposed at the next quadrennial congress of the Foundation.

(b) In the meantime, the Foundation should, with the cooperation of the Technical Committee of the IAAF and other relevant parties, identify specific areas of particular concern and interest where Requests for Proposals would be distributed and the involvement of independent bodies such as universities, research institutions, et al would be pursued.

Among the specific areas that should be considered would be methods to improve the judging of race walking events (the one area in our sport where subjective observations by individuals, which are non-reviewable, cast a shadow of doubt over the discipline as practiced); the preparation of calibration standards for such critical equipment as our wind measurement apparatus, etc.; and the criteria for the measurement of the reaction time of athletes from the starting blocks.

4. Stimulating participation by Member Federations. The task force considered the desirability of pursuing measures that would secure the involvement of individual Member Federations in activities sponsored or partially funded by the Foundation. Specifically, the IAAF could annually sponsor a contest among members, restricted to those within certain parameters to be established by the Foundation (e.g., MFs that have not placed athletes in a semi-final at a WCA or Olympics, of which there are some 121!) that would be invited to submit specific projects to be carried out in their country for which the Foundation would make a modest grant but where they would be required to secure complementary financing (from in-country private or public sources) in order to achieve a significant measurable result within a time certain. Such proposals would be submitted to a committee designated by the Foundation and would be published on the Foundation’s web page. All aimed at securing additional awareness of the Foundation and identification with its service community, namely Member Federations.

5. Branding the Foundation. To date, we have done relatively little to identify the Foundation with the projects that it sponsors, either in part or in their entirety, whether these are publications, research or events. In fact, it was noted that the Foundation’s web page was no longer active; a situation which

must be corrected immediately. Our goal should be to secure recognition of the Foundation for its contributions and role in facilitating certain developments that contribute to our sport. Our extensive catalogue of sponsored publications, our contributions to the infrastructure of our less fortunate members, our funded research and our identification with projects undertaken by our smaller Members, should all contribute to creating an awareness which would facilitate the solicitation of financial contributions from individuals and corporate entities, anxious to identify themselves with a sport that is so beneficial to the youth of the world.

- 6. Youth athletics.** Significant progress has been made by the IAAF in structuring and promoting their youth programs. Particularly outstanding is the success in securing the participation of national governments and a major international firm (Nestle) in supporting the Kids Athletics program which was designed by IAAF.

Nestlé's involvement is particularly important since their commitment is directly related to the IAAF and its Members' performance in training a specific number of lecturers in a designated number of countries where the program is to be implemented with the goal of initiating over 200,000 children in each of the four years for which the program is funded.

This program will enable the IAAF to boost grassroots development worldwide, coupling an educational component with a skills development aspect, while allowing the IAAF to organize additional courses throughout the world and provide financial support to MFs for the introduction of the Kids Athletics program at the national level.

Coupled with the IAAF's competition programs for Youth and Junior athletes, this promises to offer Athletics a competitive stance against the other sports that are competing for the attention of the youth of the world, an effort in which to date we have been making limited impact and should merit the applause and continued support of the Foundation which has generously underwritten such activities in the past.

Additional areas of interest. There was an additional area of interest which was included in the paper that was prepared for discussion at the meeting in London but which had to be deferred due to the absence of major contributors who were counted upon to make significant input on the indicated items.

- 7. Creating Athletics personalities.** The author emphasized his concern over the need to markedly augment such efforts as may be currently underway to develop true sports personalities that enhance the image of our sport while also promoting the value of the individual athlete⁴. With the exception of a few truly

⁴ Over the past few years, the IAAF has conducted a number of media training programs for a select group of elite athletes aimed at increasing their articulateness and comfort when interacting with the written and electronic media

unique individuals – Isanbayeva, Bolt – we (and our event promoters) currently suffer from a paucity of widely recognized personalities amongst our competing athletes that will draw the crowds to the stadiums and (of ever increasing importance) to their TV sets.

This presents a potential threat to our historical share of IOC's revenues. Since 1988, Athletics has failed to achieve prime slots on US television of the Olympic Games. This is largely because we have failed to develop any athletes that have become truly household names, either in the USA (of critical importance) or elsewhere in the world. This must be a matter of concern to us, particularly given the prominent role of US TV (NBC) in providing revenue for the IOC. It is inevitable that, unless we take measures to correct this situation, our share of those revenues will in time be curtailed.

Amadeo I. D. Francis

COUNTRIES WITH “ZERO SYNTHETIC TRACK”

Situation as at June 2012

19 COUNTRIES OF MORE THAN 100,000 INHABITANTS

Africa (7)	BDI
	COM
	GUI
	MAW
	NAM
	SOM
	STP
Asia (5)	CAM
	MDV
	MGL: 2
	PLE : 2
	TLS
Europe (1)	MDA: 1
North America (3)	BIZ
	HAI: 2!
	VIN
South America (2)	GUY: 3
	SUR
Oceania (1)	SOL

8 COUNTRIES OF LESS THAN 100,000 INHABITANTS

North America (3)	AIA
	DMA
	MNT
Oceania (5)	ASA: 1
	MSH
	NFI: 3
	NRU
	TUV

- 1 concrete track or very bad shape
- 2 works on going for a new track (or on-going project)
- 3 grass track