



**AMERICAS
NETBALL**

**STRATEGIC PLAN
2022 - 2026**



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INTRODUCTION

The 2022-2026 Americas Netball Strategic Plan charts the developmental pathway for the sport of netball in the region of the Americas for the next four (4) years. The plan was developed after extensive consultation with, and input from, members and stakeholders of all relevant organizations. The plan has been designed at a time when several strategic issues plague the region and the national federations tasked with the administration of sport in their respective jurisdictions. It is imperative that Americas Netball, which is the sole organization recognized and tasked with the execution of World Netball's mandate in this region, should step to the forefront and confront these challenges by empowering and assisting its members to resolve such challenges. The plan, therefore, articulates the key intervention measures that will be adopted in response to the strategic issues that have been identified by the membership. In navigating this turbulent operating environment, at a time when the world of sport faces a plethora of challenges, which includes a global pandemic, the need for proper guidance and a focused strategic direction is key.

Americas Netball has opted to focus its developmental strategy on the national administrations that make-up its membership with the understanding that it is through the development and empowerment of these administrations that the objectives of the strategic plan will be achieved. Adopting the values of commitment, advocacy, leadership, good governance and sustainability will ensure that the organization and its membership will persevere through the current hardships to emerge as a strong, competent and resilient region. The diversity of the region requires a multi-faceted developmental approach, especially since the national organizations are at varying stages of development. Thus, the strategic approach is one that recognizes the importance of engagement as well as facilitation of the various operational levels of the membership.

Informed by World Netball's strategic pillars - *To Grow*, *To Play*, and *To Inspire*, the plan focuses on a region-specific approach towards the achievement of these international mandates. Recognizing the importance of governance, however, the plan adopts *To Govern* as the fourth strategic delivery theme for the advancement of the sport of netball in the region. It is recognized that implementation of the strategic interventions and the achievement of the strategic objectives emanating from the plan are subject to collaboration amongst the membership. The plan therefore adopts a collaborative approach towards the actioning of strategic intervention and measures, thereby ensuring that the leadership of Americas Netball works hand in hand with all its members to plan and execute strategic action items. Accountability is also built into the strategic planning framework, with key support documents such as the action and implementation, and monitoring and evaluation plans earmarked for development once the plan is finalized and adopted by the executive of Americas Netball.

MESSAGE FROM WORLD NETBALL



It really excites me to see Americas Netball, one of our five (5) Regional Federations, set their vision, mission and goals with such ambition and clarity for the next four (4) years.

As a Board of World Netball we co-created an ambitious, progressive and agile strategy with our Members in 2021, with a mission to expand netball's worldwide reach and impact, building on our unique female-focused foundations, and a vision to create a sport that is open to all and inspires netballers to embrace opportunities and achieve their potential.

In order for World Netball to achieve its goals, set out in our plan under our three core strategies: To Grow, To Play and To Inspire, it is critical that our Membership works collaboratively with us, and Americas Netball has demonstrated its clear intention to do so through this new

strategy, underpinned by the same three themes, whilst also highlighting the role of good governance for their development.

As one of our largest Regions, with 15 Full World Netball Members and 3 Associate Members, the support and assistance from Americas Netball is essential in helping our sport achieve its goals, and we thank you for your continued hard work to grow our game, expand our worldwide reach, and inspire the next generation.

Being such a large Region, it is crucial that the Strategic Plan created was bespoke to benefit all of the members of the Americas, and it is evident from the extensive consultation process that has taken place between the Americas Netball Board and its Membership that this was at the forefront of the Region's plans.

With goals to grow the regional participation levels, establish a competition framework, and partner with regional and international Non-Governmental Organisation's to facilitate health, wellness, inclusion and advocacy for its Membership, I am excited to see what the next four (4) years bring for the Americas Region, both on and off the court, at every level of the game.

Just like the collaboration needed for World Netball to achieve its goals, Americas Netball requires the same efforts and teamwork from its Membership as it begins this new journey, and I have no doubt every Member will work tirelessly to play their part. We shall be there to support you in your endeavours. Together, we can create a better world through netball, and the World Netball 'team' looks forward to working with you all over the next four (4) years and beyond to continue to do so.

Liz Nicholl, CBE

World Netball President

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



It gives me great pleasure to have experienced the collective effort and dedication of our membership, as we steered towards the identification and pursuit of a new strategic direction for the Americas Netball Region. Since taking up the mantle of leadership of this organization, I have been lucky to witness the authenticity and passion of our membership as it relates to the growth and development of the sport of netball. Although our passions sometimes bring us contentions, it is understandable in the world of sport that it is okay to agree to disagree sometime, especially when we put the future of our organizations and our sport ahead of our own personal ambitions.

I am proud to have witnessed the collaboration and engagement of our members, as we embarked on this new and exciting journey to chart our new strategic direction. Just as we so wholly gave of our time and ourselves—to discuss our issues, partake in focus group session, complete questionnaires and provide recommendation on how our organization/s should approach the development of our sport, we can now experience the bliss and satisfaction of actualizing the strategic plan.

This strategic plan, crafted from the requirements of our membership and more so the advancement, development and growth of the sport of netball, cannot be implemented outside of a concerted collaborative effort. Having put in the work, we must now move forward to action to ensure that those action items that we so desperately want to see manifest, are realized through purposeful and directed effort. As the President of Americas Netball, I assure you that the entire executive is ready and willing to steer this organization in this new strategic direction. We realize that we cannot do this alone. It requires our collective effort.

Just as the saying advises: *'you must employ new methods, if you wish to realize new results'* so too must we adopt new strategies to navigate the turbulent world of sport. As we face the storms, and deploy our strategic objectives, I call on each and every one of you, to play your part, to ensure that our hard work, does not go to waste, but instead is championed forward so that in four (4) years, we can look back on our efforts and achievements, and say we did it.

STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

Americas Netball is poised to be a major player in the world of international netball. As one of the biggest regions, with a number of world-ranked members, the organization has a proven track record and limitless possibilities as it relates to the advancement and development of the sport of netball globally. As with any regional entity, the organization is not without its problems and issues; however, none of the issues are unique or peculiar to the organization. Many of the issues identified are similar in nature to those experienced by other regional sport governing bodies. The key or pertinent issue at this juncture is how to develop holistic plans to address the identified issues and instigate the purposeful advancement of the organization and its membership. After conducting a number of strategic sessions to garner feedback from the general membership and key stakeholders, an overarching portrait has been painted of Americas Netball, which gives some insight into the organization's operations. This insight also assisted in the identification of some of the key issues plaguing the organization as well as key interventions required to address them.

The effects of the global pandemic on sport worldwide have offered the organization an opportunity to look inwards, with a view to conducting more effective and efficient operations whilst increasing service delivery to its membership. The current down-turn in world-wide sporting activity also creates opportunities for organizational restructuring and re-alignment, with the understanding that to survive, sporting organizations need to adapt. Thus, in an effort to properly navigate the major issues which retard the development of the sport of netball in the region, as well as the developmental efforts of the organization, effort must be made to identify the key issues affecting or impacting the organization.

Strategic Issues

An evaluation of the operations of Americas Netball revealed a number of issues that seemingly obstruct the organization's development. Additionally, the members identified key issues which they interpreted as drawbacks to the organization's development. The key issues identified include;

- Lack of sponsorship, poor marketing and communication and declining popularity
- Disparity in the stages of development of regional members and the existence of cultural differences and complexities which foster further disparity
- Lack of guiding policies and standard operating procedures to guide or inform members
- Lack of skilled coaches, umpires and standardized progression pathways for the development of capacities
- Lack of succession planning at the level of administrators
- Access to funding and developmental programmes
- Deficient governance structures, lack of research and technological advancements
- Insufficient tournaments and sub-standard competition framework
- Low level administrative and technical capacity
- Divisiveness amongst the general membership and within the organizations in the region
- High attrition rate owing to lack of developmental, professional and scholarship opportunities for athletes
- Adoption of region-wide child protection policies and safeguarding of athletes and coaches

S.W.O.T

STRENGTHS

- Largest membership region in the World Netball
- World-ranked members as well as world recognized technical officials
- Representation on World Netball boards and committees
- Proven track record of performance and regional integration
- Existence of talented athletes and untapped athletic potential
- A cadre of competent and strong administrators and administrations

WEAKNESSES

- Divisiveness amongst membership
- Poor administrative structures and planning
- Lack of a holistic development framework
- Lack of qualified administrative and technical personnel
- Absence of progression pathways for technical skill advancement

OPPORTUNITIES

- Room for expansion into virgin and historically marginalized territories
- Engagement of regional institutions and organizations for the facilitation of strategic partnerships to operationalize strategic measures
- Collaboration with NGOs for the advancement of women and girls in sport
- Leverage the historical significance of the sport in relation to the advancement and empowerment of young women and girls

THREATS

- Existence and growth of break-out factions within the membership
- Loss of players, administrators and key stakeholders to other sporting disciplines
- The negative impact and economic fallout of the Covid-19 pandemic within the region
- Stigmatization of the sport and declining participation rates across all age-groups
- High travel costs within the region
- Lack of proper facilities
- Policy deficiencies in the area of athlete protection
- Inequality in funding allocated to female versus male sports in the region

P.E.S.T.L.E

Political

- Constantly shifting political landscape. Shifts in the political electorate and administrations creates policy shifts which most often leads to the demotion of sport on the policy agenda. Funding is also affected, in addition to the negative effects of political unrest. Due to the diversity of political systems that exist across the span of the membership, a targeted approach and plan has to be developed to treat with various territories as distinct regions.

Economical

- The economic climate in the region is quite volatile. The disparity that exists within the territories that make-up the region, are quite significant. There is an equal mix of developed, developing and SIDS that make up the region. Some territories have very robust economies, and thus can invest heavily in sport development. However, many of the territories have relatively small economies, which negatively impacts investments in sport. Pre-Covid, many territories invested significant revenue into sport development, whilst others could only cover the basic amenities required for sport participation. Post-Covid, the economic realities of the region has changed, and policy priorities have shifted. With the focus now on healthcare and managing the effects of the pandemic, sport financing has become problematic and will continue to be as the effects of the pandemic linger.

Sociological

- Owing to the developmental disparity that exists within the region, sociologically, a number of issues exist which impact the operations of the organization. Human rights issues and violations are prevalent in a number of territories, as well as issues of crime, drugs and illnesses. Some territories are better equipped to manage these issues, whilst others are somewhat overwhelmed. The plethora of issues that exist within the region, as well as the extenuating circumstances presented by other territories requires the institution to adopt a multi-faceted approach towards its development. Avenues exist for engagement programmes to be developed to assist specific regions with particular social issues.

Technological

- Technology-wise, some territories are quite advanced and are able to afford new and emerging technologies and technological advances to aid in their development efforts. For the most part however, the region suffers from a dearth of technological adoption and advancement. Many of the territories are not in a financial position to invest in the relevant technologies for sport advancement. This has hampered development as well as created the situation where international ranking and positioning have declined and continue to decline.

Legal

- Most if not all the territories of the region, have strong legal frameworks. Pertinent legislation guiding sport participation, child protection and other key aspects of athlete welfare are enshrined within the relevant legislation. It should be noted that in relation to sport, some territories (SIDS predominantly) are currently working on key legislation which seek to protect the welfare of athletes. Nonetheless, within the region, key legal issues in relation to sport revolve around dispute resolution, child protection, autonomy and financial management. The issue of national law versus regional and international affiliations have been challenged, but a precedence has been set in this regard. Thus, it is imperative that an understanding of the legal frameworks of the relevant jurisdictions be taken into account when reviewing the constitution and applying certain articles.

Environmental

- Environmental awareness has been prioritized on many policy agendas in the region. Many territories are host to eco-tourism and other environmental initiatives aligned to the SDGs. Tourism is also a mainstay of many of the region's economies; as such, the topic of sport and environmental sustainability is a hot topic item. As it relates to sport-specific environmental issues, it is imperative that a holistic approach be adopted towards the development of the sport in the region. Particular care has to be taken to align plans and operations to both local and international policy agendas in addition to keeping abreast with real time developments in environmental policy.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Mission

To provide strategic leadership and guidance to our membership, through the establishment of policy and procedural frameworks that seek to facilitate increased administrative competence, and the holistic development of the sport of netball in the region.

Vision

The creation of an environment that facilitates the development of a robust administrative network, working in synergy and guided by strategic policy and principles towards the advancement of the sport of netball in this region.

Values

- **Commitment**
 - Ensuring that the executive, members and affiliates are committed to the task and willing to put in the work to achieve our vision.
- **Advocacy**
 - Working towards the upliftment and recognition of our sport and our members. Fighting for equality, equity and growth.
- **Leadership**
 - To serve as a beacon of integrity and transparency to our members, and to set the standard for advancement and best practice as it relates to administration, management and technical development.
- **Good Governance**
 - Ensuring that the administrations of our membership align to good governance principles; understanding that for us to grow and achieve our strategic mandates, strong and competent administrations will serve as the foundations upon which our growth and development must be built.
- **Sustainability**
 - The development of structures, frameworks and procedures that seek to redefine how we transact our operations, and fosters not only growth and stability, but sustained expansion and elevation.

STRATEGIC APPROACH

Strategic Priorities

- Creating and establishing a tournament framework
- Increasing membership and expanding sport
- Establishment of a technical development framework; match officials and administrators
- Marketing, promotion and financing
- Governance, advocacy, administration and management
- Communication amongst membership
- Sport development
- Establishment of procedural and policy framework

Strategic Goals

- Increase in the number and competitive level of regional tournaments & championships
- Creation of an enabling environment that fosters the development of membership teams and players.
- Expansion across all areas of the sport, that is, an increase in the overall participation rate at the level of our administrations, players, volunteers, match officials and supporters
- Creation of a system which seeks to support our development thrust, by creating and establishing distinct pathways for increasing capacity at the various levels of match officials and administrative personnel
- Explore collaborative ventures and partnerships to increase the sport's popularity and attractiveness; and expand market-share in the region, whilst seeking to generate as well as create opportunities for funding, sponsorship, investments and business creation
- Redesign administrative functions to better serve our membership by firstly creating a policy framework, expanding our administrative structure, and implementing policies and procedures for the alignment of the general membership
- Review our communications networks and channels towards creating a more expansive and wider-reaching communications network which facilitates more efficient and effective communication amongst the membership
- Conceptualize and implement a development plan for the sport of netball in the region, which encompasses components of administration, players' and match officials' developmental pathways, with key support mechanisms that ultimately generate the required competencies to elevate the regions' members' rankings and status globally

DELIVERY FRAMEWORK

To Grow:

Increase regional participation, reach, relevance and capacity

1. Engage members in brand development, promotion and development of a region-wide marketing plan
2. Assess and identify the deficiency gaps within the general membership, and provide capacity building programmes to address said deficiencies in administrative and technical operations
3. Work with the general membership to secure funding for the implementation of development programmes
4. The standardization of operational, administrative and technical structures and procedures across the region and our membership
5. Establish collaborative arrangements with regional organizations and institutions to foster growth and development, inclusion, and increased participation
6. Sensitize the general membership to, and instigate the adoption of business models for development of the region's administrative bodies
7. Development and implementation of youth engagement and mentorship programmes across the region
8. Development and launching of a region-specific sport development programme

To Play:

Drive game development and regional delivery of a portfolio of thriving world-class events:

1. Establish a competition framework for the region
2. Work with key institutions towards the establishment of development centres in key, strategic jurisdictions
3. Work with our membership towards the creation and establishment of regional age-group tournaments and programmes
4. Engage the general membership towards the establishment of a regional professional league/tournament
5. Establish an internship programme with key institutions for the development of a volunteer programme in the region
6. Collaborate with other regions to facilitate and/or create an exchange programme to explore avenues for employment and capacity building for the benefit of the membership
7. Embrace technology, innovation and science for sport development in the region

To Inspire:

Harness the power of netball to change lives;

1. Partner with regional and international NGO's to facilitate health, wellness, inclusion and advocacy for our membership, especially young women
2. Develop and implement a mentorship and young leaders' programme across our membership
3. Engage high-level regional players and administrators to serve as spokespersons for the region
4. Seek funding and collaborative partnerships for the institution of a scholarship programme for regional student athletes
5. Establish an intra-regional exchange programme to assist developing nations as well as to foster knowledge sharing and skill development amongst members

To Govern:

Development of an astute leadership framework that underpins our strategic focus and aims to provide the necessary guidance and policy- and procedural-advocacy that our membership requires.

1. Articulation of a development framework for sport and our members in the region
2. Develop procedural manuals for members and how-to guides for administrative and technical procedures and operations
3. Embark on reforms (institutional, constitutional etc.) to realign the organization with the operating environment of the region as well as to facilitate strategic development
4. Develop, engage and institute measures aimed at fostering cooperation, cohesion and collaboration amongst our members
5. Engage World Netball to intercede and serve as a mediator to assist in the resolution of membership issues that exist within the region
6. Develop and advance linguistic courses for members to aid collaboration and membership exchanges across languages (French, Spanish and English)
7. Conduct research and data gathering within the region to inform strategic development

SUPPORT MECHANISMS

This strategic plan is extensive because it seeks to address regional reach and complexity. Thus, it is imperative that a support framework be developed to facilitate its implementation. In support of this exercise, the executive will review its administrative structures to align its operations to the new strategic direction. A key item will be the engagement of the general membership in the formation of new and strategically led committees to support strategic implementation. The various committees, under the direction of the executive, will engage in the development of a comprehensive action plan aimed at setting timelines and identifying strategic imperatives for implementation over the course of the lifespan of the plan.

The executive will also leverage the organization's affiliations and relationships with World Netball's key strategic partners to assist in strategic implementation and service delivery to the membership. It is understood that resources, especially financial resources, are integral to the execution of the new strategies, thus, focus will be placed on securing funding and other resources which can underpin strategic implementations and interventions. Subsequently, key policy frameworks will be developed, through the necessary implementation support requirements. These will include the development of the following support, regulatory, and guiding frameworks:

- Strategic action plan document
- Operational Plan 2022-2026
- Communications plan and strategy
- Monitoring and Evaluation framework
- Stakeholder identification matrix and engagement plan

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

A cross-sectional committee will be established to monitor and manage the implementation of the strategic plan. As part of its remit, the committee will be tasked with liaising with the executive to develop action plans and other supporting documents and to oversee the implementation and management of said plans. Reviews will be conducted annually to assess the effectiveness of implementation as well as quality assurance as it relates to the execution of annual operational plans. A mid-term review will also be conducted after the second year of implementation to align the strategic plan to any policy or environmental shifts. The implementation and management committee will, therefore, be responsible for conducting the mid-term review, with assistance from the relevant experts from strategic partners. If strategic alignment is deemed necessary after the mid-term review, members of the committee will consult with the executive and general membership on the way forward.

At year four of plans' life cycle, a summative evaluation will be conducted to assess policy impact and outcomes against the policy goals and objectives. The committee will consult with key strategic partners on the development of the evaluation framework for the summative evaluation. The findings from the evaluation will be reported to the executive and the general membership, and a decision will be taken in relation to renewal of the strategic plan at the end of the five-year cycle.

AMERICAS NETBALL STRATEGIC PLAN



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