

# DEVELOPMENT, POLITICS AND THE FEASIBILITY OF HOSTING THE OLYMPIC GAMES IN AFRICA

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## ABSTRACT

The Olympic Games are a mega-sport event of unparalleled prestige and status on a global scale. The host city is not only rewarded with fame, but since the commercialisation of the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games, also with the substantial financial benefits, which accrue from staging the Games. The Olympic Games in the modern era have become highly commercialised and generate substantial sums of money. Apart from Africa, all the continents of the world have already had the opportunity to host the Olympic Games. However, the host cities were without exception situated in developed countries that could absorb the substantial costs that staging the Olympic Games entail. This article investigates the feasibility and desirability of hosting the Games in an African city from a developmental perspective and attempts to answer the following question: *Is the staging justifiable in light of the continent's developmental problem?*

**Keywords:** olympic games; Africa; host city; development; olympic rings

## THE OLYMPIC GAMES AND AFRICA

The Olympic Games, with their trademark logo, with its five interlocking rings of blue, yellow, black, green and red, each representing a continent, have embedded themselves firmly in the mega-sport environment. The central black ring supposedly

**UNISA**   
university  
of south africa

Politeia  
Volume 34 | Number 2 | 2015  
pp. 24–39

Print ISSN 0256-8845

represents the African continent, which has produced multiple Olympic gold medallists in the last 50 years, and has built a proud record in the annals of the Olympic Games. However, in spite of Africa's achievements, the sentiment behind the inclusive nature of the logo remains unrealised, because the Olympic Games have never been staged in Africa.

There is broad consensus that staging the Olympic Games provides instant and unparalleled access to global prestige and international recognition. The 22 cities that previously had the privilege of hosting the Olympic Games obtained an almost instant fame in the eyes of the international community. The Games provide the opportunity to showcase to a global audience on all major television networks in the world not only the country's organisational prowess, developmental status and capability, but also its cultural, architectural and tourist attractions. Since the first commercial Games in 1984 in Los Angeles, the host cities have been richly rewarded with substantial financial spin-offs, which are implicitly attached to staging the tournament (Bohlman and Van Heerden 2010, 1).

The prestige of hosting the Olympic Games has been extended to all continents but Africa. Ironically, even a relatively 'small' nation such as Australia has had the opportunity to stage the Games twice (in Melbourne in 1956, and the highly successful Games in Sydney in 2000), while Africa remains the only continent which has not staged the event.

The former President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Mr Jacques Rogge, has, on more than one occasion, publicly expressed a desire that Africa should stage the Olympic Games. The continent already proved its organisational prowess in staging a mega-sport event when South Africa played host for the 2010 Soccer World Cup. Its success proved that Africa has the organisational skill and prowess to aim even higher and host the Olympic Games. South Africa (Cape Town) put in an unsuccessful bid for the 2004 Olympic Games, but the desire and political will to submit another bid seem to have subsided.

There are benefits to staging the Games, because this is implicitly a strong mechanism to transform societies and boost development. Sport has the inherent potential to stimulate infrastructure building, with a related positive secondary impact on the country's infrastructure (communications, transport system) socio-economic development (housing and running water) and the stimulation of the economy through business (sport sponsorships) (Levermore and Beacom 2009: 37).

However, from a political and developmental angle, the central inclination of mega-sport events, such as the Olympic Games, is substantially capitalist and strongly aligned with modernisation and neo-liberal approaches. This capitalist, profit-driven inclination of sport has meant that the hosting of mega-sport events in the modern era had therefore become progressively the exclusive prerogative of developed countries (Bohlman and Van Heerden 2010, 1).

In the broader field of political development, mega-sport organisations such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) predominantly act as multi-national companies with a strongly capitalist approach, mirroring the relationship between developed and developing countries. The mega-sport organisations' relationship with their members and host countries display similarities to that between core and periphery areas (developed and rich versus developing and poor) as in the field of political development, where the core manipulates the profits of mega-sport events to enrich itself, even to the detriment of the host city. This is a strategy that aligns strongly with the salient features of the dependency theory in political development.

## DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND MEGA-SPORT EVENTS

As indicated, the organisation of mega-sport events, such as the Olympic Games and the Soccer World Cup, was previously almost exclusively the prerogative of the rich and powerful developed countries in the Western world. However, a definite shift has become evident over the past decade. It seems that the prerogative to host mega-sport events has progressively been extended to developing areas and developing countries. On the basis of a rotational system that was adopted by mega-sport organisations, the Soccer World Cup was allocated to South Africa (2010), followed by both the Soccer World Cup (2014) and the Olympic Games (2016) being awarded to Brazil.

However, within a political and developmental context, it should be understood that the awarding of these mega-sport events still remains firmly set within the parameters of the modernisation and capitalist approaches. The ability of sport initiatives to address developmental challenges in host countries was firmly suppressed by the constraints of the modernisation approach and related neo-liberalism theories. As Levermore and Beacom (2009: 29) explain, neo-liberalism shares many of the characteristics of modernisation and the current role of mega-sport organisations undermines the potential development of low-income countries because they channel the accrued profits for their own benefit.

Although South Africa hosted the 2010 Soccer World Cup, the financial benefits of the tournament were almost exclusively absorbed by the core (FIFA), and the periphery (the poor and less developed) benefitted very little in terms of socio-economic development. The undeclared aim of the mega-sport bodies is not developmental in nature, but to accumulate profits within the core without any regard for the socio-economic problems in the host city or country.

However, in spite of the lack of developmental benefits, countries in Asia, South America and even in Africa, continue to put their hand up to demonstrate that they also have the infrastructure, the organisational prowess and the technical ability to compete with traditional developed centres such as London, Paris, Moscow and Los

Angeles in hosting mega-sport events. Several mega-sport events have taken place in developing countries, such as the Soccer World Cup in South Africa (2010) and the UEFA Football Championship in Poland (2012). These would be followed by the Soccer World Cup in Brazil in 2014, and the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro in 2016 (Pillay, Tomlinson and Bass 2009: 83; *The Saturday Herald* 2015). However, the events were, and will still be hosted within the confinements of the core-periphery relationship, and based on the principles of modernisation, neo-liberalism and capitalism with very little regard for the developmental goals of the developing area, country or city. The Barra Olympic Park in Rio de Janeiro is being constructed by the private sector, and will be sold on the open market (*The Saturday Herald* 2015), and is not earmarked as housing for the poor.

In light of the introductory discussion the question is, therefore, whether it is feasible or desirable within a political and developmental context that an African city bid for the Olympic Games. The following two questions should therefore be considered before the desirability of a bid is determined.

The critical aspect is to firstly determine the underpinning developmental value when a mega-sport event is allocated to a developing country. Will the hosting of the Olympic Games be done within the modernisation paradigm, or will a multi-dimensional developmental approach be adopted, with a strong embedded socio-economic approach and sensitivity for local developmental problems?

Underpinning the first question are strongly related normative developmental perspectives such as the following: *Is it ethically and normatively justifiable that a developing country (in Africa) should consider bidding, given the enormous expenditure that accompanies a bid for a mega-sport event?* This question should be seen against the background of the political and developmental problems and challenges facing this continent, such as poverty and lack of housing and job creation.

Over recent decades, international sport bodies and host cities have adopted a broadly capitalist approach within the broader paradigm of modernisation, with little regard for developmental problems. Should cities (countries) in Africa therefore, not get their priorities right and address their underdevelopment first and foremost, disregarding any potential advantages of spin-offs from a mega-sport event?

A number of subsections follow, which attempt to deduce answers to the central question of the article. This will be followed by an analysis of the financial impact and benefits of hosting the Games in the modern era, and the potential impact and benefits for a developing country.

## Bidding for the games: a race within a race

The Olympic Games are a mega-sport event hosting multi-sports events from mega-sports such as athletics and swimming to the smaller sport codes. They are a unique

tournament, a combination of history and tradition, with all the aspects of a global pageant and the drama and excellence of the highest standards of international sport.

The first modern Games were held in Athens in 1896, and every four years since then they have been held in other cities all over the world. The time span of four years reflects the Greek origin of the Games, because the Olympiad is an ancient time span of four years. The IOC adopted a bidding system that makes provision for a global international contest between cities for the right and prestige of staging the Games.

The international bidding contest between countries is preceded by a competition between rival cities within each country, which is a race within a race. When South Africa submitted a bid for the 2004 Olympic Games, Cape Town had to compete against both Johannesburg and Durban before it was permitted to bid for the grand prize on behalf of South Africa.

The next bidding takes place on a global scale, when cities all over the world submit bids to the IOC, which then decides on the winning city by way of an inspection, followed by a secret ballot among the IOC's members. The competition is very strong and no expenses are spared for the privilege to stage the mega-sport event, with political influence and networking being exploited in the fullest sense. De Lange (1998: 12) refers to the different strategies of the cities as 'the games cities play which are less predictable than a 100 metre event' and quoted Deford: 'Remember the biggest Olympic Games of them all nowadays are getting the Olympic Games to your city.'

The magnitude of a mega-sport event, such as the Olympic Games, should be distinguished from area events or world championships in smaller sport codes, because its status and magnitude are without equal. In a hierarchy of mega-sport events, the Olympic Games are at the top, even surpassing the global standing of the Soccer World Cup.

The magnitude of the Olympic Games may also be deduced from the payments that US broadcasters are prepared to make for exclusive rights. The bidding for the privilege of staging the Games has increased exponentially and dramatically after they were hosted in Los Angeles in 1984, and generated an unheard of profit of US\$215 million. The commercial success of the Los Angeles Games brought an end to the financial woes of previous host cities, such as Montreal, which took decades to pay off the 1976 Olympic Games. During the pre-commercial era (i.e. before Los Angeles) most potential host cities were not over-eager to enter the bidding race, because of the financial risks involved (Simson and Jennings 1992: 308).

However, the Los Angeles Olympic Games changed the rules, introducing a commercial era, and pulling the big spenders into the equation. Mega-corporations, such as the United States television broadcasters, suddenly fought for the right to broadcast the Games, and their urgency was reflected in the increasing sums of money that they were prepared to pay for exclusive broadcast rights (see Table 1).

**Table 1:** Payment for broadcasting rights

1976 Montreal Olympic Games	US\$25 million
1980 Moscow Olympic Games	US\$72 million
1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games	US\$225 million
2012 London Olympic Games	US\$2 770 million

(Pillay et al. 2010, 5).

More major sponsors, such as Adidas and Nike, also joined the bidding for the sole right to sponsorships, and invested undisclosed sums of money in mega-sport events. The over-commercialisation of the Olympic Games might have safeguarded the tournament's future but changed its complexion, because in escalating its financial status, its basic values were undermined.

The global bidding between cities for the Olympic Games is no small change. Already during the first stages, the financial ability of the bidders is taxed. It must be remembered that the bidding is merely for the right to stage the Games, and does not include costs such as the construction of stadiums, the accommodation for teams and visitors and the improvement of the infrastructure of airports, roads and trains, which could potentially run to billions of dollars. Barcelona's bid to be awarded the right to stage the 1992 Games totalled more than US\$10 million, excluding construction and other costs (Simson and Jennings 1992: 308). London spent US\$45 million just to put their bid on the table (Coe 2012, 125); the costs for staging the Games will be outlined below.

## COUNTING THE COST OF THE GAMES: THE 2012 OLYMPIC GAMES

In the history of the Olympic Games, only London has won the right to host the spectacle three times. The first time was in 1908, when the future of the Olympic Games was seriously jeopardised after the previous two disastrous attempts – in Paris in 1900 and St Louis in 1904. The 1900 and 1904 tournaments were merely part of World Exhibition events (Laing 1996, 29), and many of the competitors were not even aware that they were taking part in the Olympic Games. However, the success of the 1908 London Olympics restored the status of the Games, secured their future and anchored further growth of the tournament.

The next Olympics in London were in 1948 after the devastation of the Second World War (1939–1945). Britain was almost bankrupt after the war, but was able to stage the Games only three years later, again resurrecting the Olympics (Laing 1996: 29). It took more than 60 years for the Olympic Games to be staged in London for the third time, in 2012, but the general consensus after the closing ceremony was that the city set new standards for the future.

There are various ways of determining the success of an Olympic Games event, but generally the standard of the competition, the efficiency of the technical and administration dimensions and the commercial success are the best yardstick. The 2012 London Olympic Games provide, valuable insight into the costs involved in staging a mega-sport event of such, magnitude. The costs should be measured across a broad spectrum, including expenditure such as construction costs of stadiums, upgrading the road and railway infrastructure, establishing a security system for visitors and providing accommodation for visitors and athletes. An investigation will therefore, have to consider the cost over the whole period. In this investigation the cost will be considered from the point in time when the IOC awarded the Games to London; the investigation will also include the predictions for five years after the closing ceremony. The investigation's aim is to create a benchmark to work against to ascertain what the economic impact would be if a city in Africa undertook a similar venture.

One of the first challenges for the host city is to build the infrastructural capacity to stage the mega-sport event, which entails mainly construction costs. This venture requires huge capital investments, because infrastructure such as roads, airports and trains requires major capital.

When Athens (Greece) hosted the 2004 Olympic Games, the total construction costs of the infrastructure, accommodation and stadiums spiralled up to US\$11, 2 billion. The main cost was the upgrading of the city's infrastructure, which included a major revamp, of the metropolitan tram system, the toll motorway, airport, roads and also the paving of many thoroughfares in the centre of Athens. The Chinese capital of Beijing had to pump close to US\$40 billion into the improvement of infrastructure to cope with the demands of the 2008 Olympic Games (Matthewman 2009, 4). The London Olympics also taxed the national coffers heavily, with the Games-related expenditure estimated at £12 billion (US\$16 billion) (Lloyds Banking Group 2012, 8).

The cost of getting the infrastructure to the required level, therefore, ranged between US\$11, 2 billion (Athens) and US\$40 billion (Beijing). However, it should be taken into cognisance that these host cities were in developed countries in the post-industrialised phase, with a reasonably well-developed infrastructure. The construction costs in any African city would be much higher because of the lack of a well-established infrastructure; the infrastructure consideration requires substantial upgrading to meet the required standard.

On the positive side, the construction projects will certainly have economic spin-offs for the host city. When construction projects of this magnitude are undertaken, it benefits a whole host of local contractors and local building industries. During the 2012 London Olympics a broad variety of 800 British firms was awarded contracts and subcontracts and benefited from the building and related contracts. The pre- and post-Games construction activities have contributed £4,5 billion (US\$6,8 billion) to

the UK's gross national product, with about 70 per cent of the total figure accrued before the Games, and the remainder accrued as part of the post-Olympic legacy.

In general, the construction industry for the 2012 Games created the equivalent of 78 000 years of accumulative employment. An additional 74 000 years of employment were supported by the construction sector's purchases from its supply chain. (Lloyds Banking Group 2012, 8).

The Olympics also ensure a large income from the tourist market. Sport Market Intelligence has calculated that the London Games had a direct income from increased tourism that exceeded US\$8 billion with a (post-Olympic) legacy of a further US\$5 billion. The same phenomenon was also experienced by previous host-cities, where the showcasing and exposure translates into an influx of visitors to the city during and for decades after the Games. Barcelona, which staged the 1992 Olympic Games, also experienced a dramatic upswing in tourism, trade, investments and international prestige. In 1990, two years before the Games, the total number of visitors to Barcelona stood at 1, 7 million; in the year of the Games, the figure increased to 1,87 million and surprisingly, the year after the Games the total number of visitors jumped to 2,45 million per annum. The increasing trend in the tourist industry continued until it peaked in 1995 at 3 million visitors before figures evened off (De Lange 1998: 131).

The spending of large amounts of money by the visitors in London was apparent from transactions on Visa credit card accounts. Visitors from the United States were predictably at the top of the spending list, responsible for almost 13 per cent of the total sum of Visa transactions, namely, US\$175 million. Japan was the next biggest spender with 7 per cent of the total, spending US\$98 million. Even the country in the 10th place, Sweden, put transactions through Visa accounts totalling US\$47 million (N. Joubert 2012).

Within the constraints of this article, it is not possible to outline fully the financial benefits for a host city during the commercial era. (The Lloyds banking group's document provides one of the most comprehensive studies on the London Olympic Games and the details appear in the bibliography.) It is more important within the context of this article to weigh up the benefits of hosting the Games within the framework of a developmental perspective.

## SHOULD AFRICA THROW ITS HAT INTO THE (OLYMPIC) RING?

The central question that underpins this article is the feasibility or desirability of a city in a developing African country putting its name forward as a potential host city, and thereby legitimising the fifth ring of the current Olympic logo. However, to address this fundamental question, we need to understand how the nature of the Olympic Games and their underpinning values has changed in recent decades.



The Olympic Games were potentially overly attractive to potential sponsors, but the traditionally minded members of the IOC were not prepared to make the jump from amateurism to professionalism, and as a result Montreal suffered huge financial losses, which took decades to contain. As a result, the approach to organising the Olympic Games changed forever. In 1984 when the Games were staged in Los Angeles, the approach changed completely to become purely capitalist, with the sole aim of maximising profit. The entrepreneur, Peter Ueberroth, worked hard and attracted 30 sponsors, who between them contributed more than US\$500 million to the first truly commercial Olympic Games. The television company ABC paid US\$225 million for the exclusive television transmission rights, and to accommodate audiences all over the world, the events were predominantly broadcast in the evenings. The general consensus after the Games was that the purely amateur festival had been converted into a commercial spectacle, completely changing its complexion (Laing 1996: 163).

However, even in Los Angeles, the capitalist, profit driven approach did very little to uplift the slum area that surrounded the Olympic Stadium. The approach to the Games was purely to show a profit, with no intention of making allowances for any socio-economic development in the city or country. This mind set was subsequently followed by all the host cities that have staged the Olympic Games since 1984. It marked the start of the commercial era and explained why all the host cities were from developed countries, with already established infrastructures. This included Seoul (1988), Barcelona (1992), Atlanta (1996), Sydney (2000), Athens (2004), Beijing (2008) and London (2012). The selection of Rio de Janeiro (2016) in Brazil may be a change in direction, but the massive economic progress in that country has boosted its economy dramatically over the last two decades. The profit driven, capitalist trend also explains why South Africa was unsuccessful in its bid to host the 2004 Olympic Games.

However, although these host cities were in developed countries, they still had to undergo major infrastructural improvements, which ran to billions of dollars, as indicated earlier. The 1996 host city, Atlanta, created the Ring, an integrated area that housed most of the sport codes, including an indoor arena and an Olympic stadium, swimming stadium and athletics stadium at a cost of US\$1,5 billion (Laing 1996, 163), with very little of the expenditure translated into addressing the city's developmental, infrastructural and housing backlog.

The financial impact and disruption of infrastructural improvements may be of such an extent that even cities in developed countries may oppose the notion of bidding to host the Olympic Games. In 2013, the Austrian Olympic Committee (AOC) contemplated submitting a bid for the 2022 Olympic Games to bring the tournament to Vienna for the first time. However, the political and democratic tradition of the country required a referendum to test the local opinion in Vienna about the need to stage the Games. The result came as a surprise, because the Austrian city (in a high voter turnout) turned down the idea with 71, 9 per cent of its inhabitants voting

against the bid. The AOC accepted the result and subsequently withdrew their plans to stage the Olympic Games (*Beeld*: 13 March 2013).

The financial impact on the host city (country), with reference to the cost quoted above of staging the Olympic Games, is substantially different for a developed compared to a developing country. The host cities' financial strength, as reflected in the financial support from their respective countries' Gross National Product (GDP) makes for interesting reading (see Table 2).

**Table 2:** GNP and the cost of the Games

Year	City	Country	GNP in US\$
1996	Atlanta	USA	12.970 billion
2000	Sydney	Australia	655 billion
2004	Athens	Greece	218 billion
2008	Beijing	China	3 600 billion
2012	London	UK	2 264 billion

**Table 3:** Possible candidates in Africa for 2024 Olympic Games

2024	Cape Town, South Africa	224 billion
2024	Cairo, Egypt	93 billion
2024	Lagos, Nigeria	275 billion

Source: (<http://www.studentsoftheworld.infopays/rank/PNB2.html> (accessed 18 March 2015))

In order to host the Olympic Games, developing countries will have to compete with cities in developed countries, which have access to far more resources. The potential host cities in developed countries have a much higher GDP, which forms a substantial cushion to absorb the costs of hosting the Games, and their economies are less vulnerable. The costs of staging the Olympic Games in a developing country will translate into higher costs, which will form a very high percentage of that country's GDP. This fact explains the reason for Greece's financial woes during its post-Olympic phase, as its GDP is at almost the same level as that of South Africa (see Table 3).

## PROFIT OR DEVELOPMENT: BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE?

The Olympic Games are currently hosted almost exclusively with a fundamentally capitalist approach, embedded within the wider ambit of a modernisation paradigm, which allows little room for addressing domestic developmental priorities.

In various publications that appeared before and after the 2010 Soccer World Cup, the inability or unwillingness of FIFA to address South Africa's development challenges whilst maximising its own profits was pointed out. Herzenberg (2010, 2) calculated that FIFA's income during the 2010 World Cup from media and broadcast rights alone was between US\$3, 2 and 4 billion. In fact FIFA, through its multi-national, contracted, international connections (Adidas, Coca-Cola, Emirates, Hyundai, Visa, etc.) has built up a global empire that, according to its 2009 annual report, generated a profit of €147 million with reserves of €795 million.

The 2010 Soccer World Cup in South Africa resulted in a number of new stadiums being erected in the major cities and also included the improvement of the infrastructure, especially in Gauteng province. However, although the infrastructural improvements were welcomed, they did little to alleviate developmental problems in the country. It soon dawned on the South Africa host cities that the mega-stadiums that were built were nothing more than a major financial burden, and it has become a challenge to utilise the stadiums to ensure that they do not end up as white elephants, greedily absorbing maintenance fees. The Peter Mokaba stadium in Polokwane and the Nelson Mandela Bay stadium require, respectively, R70 and R65 million for maintenance per annum. The calculation is that, within five years, the maintenance cost for all the new stadiums will escalate to R450 million per annum (Cronjé 16 May 2010). In order to meet the maintenance costs alone, each of the nine stadiums that were built for the 2010 Soccer World Cup should host 12 sold-out events per annum.

The massive cost of the stadiums in South Africa before the tournament provided insight into how easily initial construction costs can spiral out of control. The Treasury originally estimated that the costs of the World Cup stadiums would be R8.4 billion. In 2009 the estimate of these costs rose to R13, 3 billion and in the final instance *City Press* noted a figure of R17,4 billion for the stadiums alone (Cottle 2011: 87).

Brazil experienced the same problem with the erections of its stadiums before the 2014 Soccer World Cup, with a heavy financial burden for government that covered 80 per cent of the cost from the public sector. The expensive stadium construction costs were over budget and varied from 50 per cent to 80 per cent above the initial estimates. The initial estimate was US\$1, 1 billion, but the cost soon escalated to US\$2,6 billion. The local stadium at Manaus used by the local team will never be able to pull crowds to fill it. The area is impoverished with large social inequality and health problems which pose questions about the distribution of public funds to the area. The cost of staging the Soccer World Cup has escalated dramatically over the last two decades. Germany spend US\$6 billion on the 2006 tournament which was the highest figure yet, but the host country Brazil had paid an estimated US\$14 billion to stage the 2014 Soccer World Cup (Lourdes 2014,7).

The maintenance of stadiums is one of the most negative aspects of staging an Olympic Games event, because they are often neglected and under-utilised afterwards. An on-site inspection of the Olympic stadium in Athens revealed that the beautiful, but very costly stadium was dilapidated with knee-high weeds growing in areas around the facility. (Many economists attribute Greece's current financial troubles partly to the high cost of hosting the 2004 Olympic Games.) It was calculated that Athens incurred costs to the extent of US\$750 million per annum to maintain the Olympic sites (Matthewman 2009, 6). In some instances, such as Seoul after the Soccer World Cup, the organisers decided it was better to demolish the stadium than to attempt to maintain it.

## HOSTING THE OLYMPIC GAMES: A TALE OF TWO CITIES?

In the preceding subsections, the feasibility and desirability of hosting the Olympic Games in Africa has been investigated from a strong developmental perspective. It is obvious that the current approach by the IOC and host cities has a strong capitalist flavour within the modernisation paradigm that will hardly benefit vulnerable developing countries on the African continent. If a developing country wants to host the Games, a more nuanced approach should be followed that will benefit not only the core, but also the poor and destitute at the periphery of society.

When a city in Africa therefore puts in a bid, it should be based on a strong development perspective and act as a catalyst to realise and fulfil some of its long-term developmental targets. The developmental approach of the bid should, as a result be diversified not only to generate a profit, but also to prioritise some of the socio-economical developmental needs of the country, such as the problem of housing, improve spatial planning and extend services to the poor (Cronje 2012). The overall preparations for the Olympic Games should, therefore, include developmental goals apart from general infrastructural upgrades. The accommodation for visitors and teams should be planned in such a way that, after the Games, it could be transformed into housing for the poor.

In Barcelona, a slum area was upgraded to host the competitors in an Olympic Village and afterwards the units were sold as town houses to local residents, but not the poor. In Athens, the congested access route from the airport was upgraded when a new airport was built and an extensive underground metro-rail system developed. These improvements have benefited the country enormously, but again with limited benefits for the poor and destitute communities in the area.

The developmental goal of utilising the benefits of the Games to reach the development targets should be accomplished to such a degree that it justifies the enormous costs. The major problem is that the possible host city candidates in Africa are bidding from a less advantageous infrastructural position because of their

underdeveloped status. They are already at a disadvantage because they have to upgrade their infrastructure from a much lower level than the developed countries, which will undoubtedly raise the costs.

Cape Town's bid to stage the 2004 Olympic Games serves as an example of the challenges that will face cities in Africa because of their developmental backlog. The problem is apparent in a comparison between the number of rooms available to visitors of past and future host cities. The comparison includes the cities of Athens (which won the 2004 bid), Rome (who was a strong contender for the 2020 Olympic Games) and Stockholm (which also bid for the 2004 Games). It should be remembered that an Olympic Games event differs from a Soccer World Cup, which is staged in a country rather than a particular city, and where the matches are played at different venues. The Olympic Games is hosted in a city and the visitors prefer accommodation close to the competition.

**Table 4:** Available accommodation per city

City	Rooms in city	Rooms in region
Athens	15 277	24 153
Rio de Janeiro	12 735	12 563
Cape Town	6 520	2 520
Rome	41000	27 515
Stockholm	38 914	21 500

When the numbers of rooms available for accommodation in the different cities are compared it is obvious that even Cape Town, one of the most outstanding tourist destinations on the Africa continent, lags far behind the other cities (see Table 4). A developing country such as South Africa will therefore be stretched to its limits to stage an Olympic Games event. As De Lange (1998: 214) explains, based on the figures above, the cost during 2004 to bring the cities in line with the needs for visitor accommodation to host the Games was as follows: Nil for Athens, Rome and Stockholm, but US\$600 million for Rio de Janeiro and US\$453 for Cape Town. The difference between the cities in the developed countries and Rio de Janeiro and Cape Town in the developing category is significant. Added to this financial burden is the erection of an Olympic Village, which would inflate the expenditure for accommodation by an additional US\$269 million (De Lange 1998: 186).

When estimates were made during Cape Town's bidding process, it was calculated that the upgrading of the city's transport system would be a massive R5, 6 billion in the period before the 2004 Olympic Games. If Cape Town were awarded the Games, the total costs of the transport system alone would have been in the region of 0, 75 per cent of South Africa's yearly GDP (De Lange 1998: 186). This

is a massive financial burden in any country straining to meet its developmental responsibilities.

## CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that a prospective host city in a developed country with a well-developed infrastructure, such as London, has less cost impact to host the Games in comparison with a city that is less developed. The 2012 London Olympic Games benefited substantially from the extensive underground network in London. The metro-rail provided the basis for transport during the Games, but cities in Africa have no comparable alternative to transport visitors and competitors. Developed countries also have an advantage in relation to the building of the venues and additional accommodation. They have a well-developed and diversified construction industry which is capable of handling big projects. There is no comparable industrial and building sector in Africa, even in the strongest economies, South Africa, Nigeria and Egypt. The erection of the venues, additional accommodation and Olympic Village would put a severe strain on the local building industry, which would be very difficult to accommodate. In Europe, it is much easier to co-opt neighbouring countries to assist with the projects, while in Africa the distances render that option impractical.

All in all, in relation to the infrastructural improvements and the building of sites and accommodation, the benefits seem too selective and not conducive to lessening the impact on the developmental backlog in developing countries. Neither the addition of the Olympic Village for athletes, nor the additional accommodation for visitors would have any bearing on addressing the housing shortages of the poorest of the poor in the country. The additional accommodation would benefit the middle class and their location would be in relation to the sport venues and not their proximity to work facilities.

The benefits of staging the Games would certainly be seen in the building industry, which would have an upswing for the years leading up to the tournament, but this would soon flatten out after the tournament had ended. In the final analysis, it is certainly prestigious to stage the Olympic Games, and the financial benefits are substantial. It would also go a long way to address the Afro-pessimism of West. However, from a developmental perspective it is unlikely that these benefits will accrue to the massive underdeveloped pockets in almost all African countries. It would be far more beneficial to aim at tournaments such as the Commonwealth Games and the Rugby World Cup than a commitment to a mega-sport event with the magnitude of the Olympic Games.

In some ways the Soccer World Cup in South Africa was a disappointment and proved that it did not benefit the supporters from neighbouring countries to the extent that was expected. The sales of tickets to African visitors from outside South Africa

accounted for only 2 per cent of the sales which amounted to 11 300. It was expected that at least 48 000 tickets would be sold to neighbouring countries (Cottle 2011: 50). The popularity of soccer is well known so it is doubtful that the majority of spectators of the neighbouring African countries would support the less popular sport codes. In the final analysis, it is obvious that Africa should not stage the Olympic Games if only to even the score, because the capitalist nature of this mega-sport event makes it very difficult to address developmental goals. Perhaps aiming for the grand prize has a price too high for developing countries in Africa.

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