



INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION ITDC-DORNA: THE CONTRIBUTION OF MANDALIKA MOTOGP TO SDG 17

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Article Info

ABSTRACT

This research focuses on the analysis of the collaboration between the Indonesia Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) and Dorna Sports in organizing the Mandalika MotoGP as a form of implementation of Transnational Public-Private Partnerships (TPPPs) within the framework of tourism diplomacy and its contribution to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 17) on global partnerships. This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design, relying on secondary data in the form of official ITDC reports, cooperation documents, policy publications, and relevant academic literature, which are analyzed thematically and interpretatively. The results of the study indicate that the ITDC-Dorna Sports collaboration is built on the basis of a complementary but asymmetrical division of roles, where ITDC plays a dominant role in providing infrastructure, regional governance, and policy coordination, while Dorna Sports has advantages in mastering technical standards, global legitimacy, and international market networks. This collaboration contributes to SDG 17 through three main dimensions, namely capacity building, resource mobilization, and multi-stakeholder governance, but this contribution is limited and faces challenges of imbalanced power relations and limited participation of local communities. The implications of this research confirm that SDG 17 is better understood as an analytical framework for interpreting the dynamics of transnational public-private partnerships in tourism diplomacy, rather than simply a normative indicator of success. These findings provide a conceptual and practical foundation for formulating more inclusive, accountable, and sustainable global partnership policies for organizing international sporting mega-events.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the past two decades, international sporting events have shifted from mere entertainment to strategic instruments in international relations and global development (Masruri et al., 2025). Developing countries utilize sports tourism to increase competitiveness, expand global networks, and build a modern national image (Aulia, 2026). Within this framework, Indonesia positions the MotoGP event in the Mandalika Special Economic Zone (SEZ) as part of tourism diplomacy aligned with national and global development agendas. Since 2022, the Mandalika MotoGP has become not only a global motorcycle racing event but also a diplomatic platform that reconciles economic, political, and sustainable development interests, emphasizing that sporting events have become a complex and multidimensional space for cross-actor interaction.

The collaboration between the Indonesia Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) and Dorna Sports is a strategic pivot in orchestrating the implementation of the Mandalika MotoGP (Rusmawati & Rasyidah, 2023). ITDC, as a state-owned enterprise mandated to develop national strategic tourism areas, represents state rationality in spatial governance, accelerating local economic development, and affirming public interests (Riyanti et al., 2025). On the other hand, Dorna Sports, as the commercial authority for MotoGP, presents symbolic capital in the form of technical excellence, global legitimacy, and established transnational networks. The dialectical relationship between these two actors reflects non-traditional diplomatic practices operating through cross-border public-private partnerships. From a public diplomacy and soft power perspective, this collaboration serves as a strategic medium for Indonesia to construct its international reputation as a capable, modern, and credible nation capable of hosting high-standard global sporting events (Amin & Munir, 2025). Thus, the Mandalika MotoGP represents a new configuration of contemporary diplomacy, where state authority is no longer monopolistic but rather dynamically negotiated through the involvement of non-state actors.

The urgency of this research is heightened in the global crisis landscape that is pressuring the international tourism and sports sectors. The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a contraction in global tourism, restricted cross-border mobility, and weakened the economic resilience of developing countries. Simultaneously, the challenges of climate change demand more sustainable international events, particularly in ecologically vulnerable coastal areas like Mandalika. This situation emphasizes that tourism diplomacy is inseparable from the global sustainable development agenda, making the Mandalika MotoGP a strategic empirical context for examining the role of international collaboration as an adaptation mechanism to the global crisis.

Field findings indicate that the collaboration between ITDC and Dorna Sports extends beyond a contractual business relationship and has evolved into a multi-actor partnership. The implementation of the Mandalika MotoGP involves the government, international investors, and local communities within a development ecosystem that promotes infrastructure, human resource capacity building, and the implementation of sustainability principles. However, the complexity of this collaboration also raises structural challenges, such as unequal actor capacity, the risk of marginalization of local communities, and ecological pressures on coastal areas. Therefore, the success of international events is determined not only by economic achievements but also by the quality of the resulting partnership governance.

Several studies since 2021 have provided important foundations for this research. Adella (2024) emphasized that international sporting events are effective soft power instruments, but their success depends on cross-actor collaborative governance and local legitimacy. Nasution et al. (2024) demonstrated that global partnerships in sporting events can support the achievement of the SDGs through resource mobilization, technology transfer, and institutional capacity building. Meanwhile, Kian (2025) emphasized the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships in responding to global crises, such as pandemics and climate change. Overall, these studies emphasize the strategic potential of international sporting events for sustainable development, which requires robust collaborative governance.

In the Indonesian context, studies on the Mandalika MotoGP are still dominated by analyses of economic impact, destination promotion, and nation branding, tending to position it solely as a tourism project. Studies linking the Mandalika MotoGP to the SDGs, particularly SDG 17 on global partnerships, are limited, including analysis of the ITDC-Dorna Sports collaboration as a form of transnational public-private partnership within a sustainable development framework. This creates a conceptual gap in the international relations literature.

Building on this gap, this study offers a novel approach through the integration of sports tourism diplomacy, the concept of transnational public-private partnerships, and the SDG 17 framework. The Mandalika MotoGP is understood not only as a global sporting event but as an international partnership mechanism that contributes to capacity building, resource mobilization, and multi-actor governance. The primary objective of this study is to analyze the contribution of the ITDC and Dorna Sports collaboration to the achievement of SDG 17, thereby providing theoretical and empirical value to international relations studies and strategic recommendations for sustainable development practices.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

In compiling this article, the researcher employed a qualitative approach, emphasizing in-depth research to gain a comprehensive understanding of the collaboration between the Indonesia Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) and Dorna Sports in organizing the MotoGP event in Mandalika (Khoir, 2025). This research relies on secondary data compiled from various literature sources, such as ITDC annual reports, official Dorna Sports documents, United Nations (UN) data and reports, books, scientific journal articles, and other credible literature. Through these sources, the researcher seeks to comprehensively explore the dynamics of the ITDC-Dorna collaboration, particularly within the context of developing sustainable sports tourism in the Mandalika area (Najiburrahman et al., 2024).

The data used in this study comes from the last ten years, between 2015 and 2025. To explain and understand the phenomena under study, this study applies a theory-based analysis method by reviewing various documents and secondary data through the conceptual framework of Transnational Public-Private Partnerships (TPPPs), tourism diplomacy, and the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 17. Therefore, this study places a primary emphasis on deepening the analysis and theoretical interpretation of the collaborative practices under study.

Qualitative research is an interpretive form of research, in which researchers interpret what they see, hear, and understand (Creswell, 2009). In this regard, through the theoretical and conceptual perspectives used, researchers will analyze and interpret the forms of tourism diplomacy undertaken by ITDC and its collaboration patterns with the promoter, Dorna Sports, in organizing the MotoGP event in the Mandalika Special Economic Zone (SEZ). They will also analyze the contribution of this sporting event to Sustainable Development Goal 17 (SDG 17) concerning global partnerships.

Furthermore, the researcher validated the research data by triangulating the data. Namely by using several data collection methods and references relevant to the research topic to increase the credibility and trustworthiness of research (Saldana, 2011). Thus, the researcher triangulated the data by combining data collection techniques through documents in the form of ITDC and Dorna annual data and reports, as well as various journal articles, with data sources from the internet in the form of relevant news and websites to analyze and evaluate the pattern of international collaboration between ITDC and Dorna, the contribution of organizing the MotoGP event in the Mandalika area to the SDG 17 target, as well as the theoretical implications used to understand the research topic in this article.

3. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

ITDC-Dorna Collaboration in Organizing MotoGP in Mandalika

The collaboration between the Indonesia Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) and Dorna Sports in organizing the international MotoGP racing event in Mandalika can be understood as a concrete manifestation of the Transnational Public Private Partnerships (TPPPs) scheme within the framework of tourism diplomacy (Elvira et al., 2024). This partnership is not merely oriented toward the technical implementation of sporting events, but represents the integration of public and private interests across borders, directed toward long-term strategic goals: the development of a sustainable tourism area and strengthening Indonesia's position within the global sports tourism network. Research findings indicate that the ITDC-Dorna Sports collaboration structure is built on a relatively clear and complementary division of roles, with each actor contributing according to its capacity, resources, and legitimacy. This pattern indicates that the Mandalika MotoGP is not merely a tourism project, but an international governance arena connecting countries, markets, and the global sports regime.

As a public entity and State-Owned Enterprise (SOE), ITDC plays a central role in the management of the Mandalika Special Economic Zone (SEZ) and the provision of physical infrastructure, a key prerequisite for hosting international-scale events (Chaniago et al., 2024). Based on official reports and field findings, ITDC's responsibilities include the construction of the Mandalika International Circuit, the development of supporting tourism facilities, and coordination across ministries and local governments to ensure the region's readiness to host global events. This contribution is not only material but also institutional, as ITDC serves as a liaison between national policies, local interests, and international standards. Research findings indicate that ITDC's involvement has boosted the capacity of the Mandalika region, including infrastructure, governance, and the readiness of local human resources.

Meanwhile, Dorna Sports, as a Spanish sports management company and the commercial rights holder for the Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme (FIM) Grand Prix, including MotoGP, plays a strategic role in the technical and global aspects of event organization. Dorna Sports is responsible for international promotion, distribution of broadcast rights to global media networks, use of the official MotoGP brand and logo, and the development of technical guidelines and safety standards that must be adhered to by local organizers. Based on the cooperation documents and research findings, Dorna Sports' role is crucial in ensuring that the Mandalika MotoGP meets international standards and gains legitimacy on the global racing calendar. Thus, Dorna Sports' contribution lies not in the physical development of the area, but rather in providing technical expertise, a global reputation, and access to international market networks.

This division of roles demonstrates a voluntary agreement between public and private actors across borders to achieve common interests through the exchange of diverse resources. The ITDC-Dorna Sports collaboration structure reflects the key characteristics of TPPPs: the involvement of public and private actors in a cross-border context, an orientation toward goals beyond purely domestic interests, and a reliance on established global rules and standards. This aligns with the definition of TPPPs proposed by Frahma (2025), who emphasizes that transnational public-private partnerships are established to address international issues through the sharing of risks, resources, and responsibilities. Afrita et al. (2024) also assert that the effectiveness and legitimacy of TPPPs lie in their ability to connect state and market interests in conditions of global interdependence, compared to a unilateral approach that has increasingly limited reach.

However, research findings also indicate that the ITDC-Dorna Sports partnership is not entirely symmetrical. Dorna Sports has significant advantages in technical knowledge, international networks, and market legitimacy, while ITDC is more dominant in its control of space, domestic regulations, and physical infrastructure. This imbalance aligns with Sakti's (2024) findings, which state that TPPPs are often characterized by unequal power relations due to differences in capacity, access to global networks, and the bargaining position of international private actors. In the context of the Mandalika MotoGP, this imbalance does not necessarily undermine collaboration but rather shapes a pattern of international governance that links national development interests with market mechanisms and global sporting regimes.

Further analysis of this collaborative structure shows that each actor's contribution does not always translate into equal financial investment. ITDC's annual report and interviews indicate that ITDC's primary contribution is realized through the development and management of regional infrastructure as part of the Mandalika Special Economic Zone (SEZ) development mandate. Conversely, Dorna Sports contributes in the form of hosting rights, international technical standards, event management, and access to global promotion and media. This pattern of resource exchange reflects the characteristics of TPPPs, where collaboration is built on the basis of complementarity of assets, expertise, and legitimacy, rather than solely financial equality (Nur, 2023). Thus, the limited public data on the investment value of each actor does not obscure the existence of a collaborative structure, but rather confirms that the ITDC-Dorna Sports partnership is carried out through a capacity-based role division and power relations that are not completely balanced.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that the collaboration between ITDC and Dorna Sports in organizing the Mandalika MotoGP is a concrete example of how TPPPs operate in tourism diplomacy. This partnership not only facilitates the organization of an international sporting event but also establishes a transnational governance mechanism that integrates national development interests, global market logic, and international sporting regime standards. Thus, the Mandalika MotoGP can be understood as a strategic arena where tourism diplomacy, public-private partnerships, and sustainable development are intertwined in practice.

Contribution to SDG 17

The collaboration between the Indonesia Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) and Dorna Sports in organizing the international MotoGP racing event in Mandalika can be analyzed as a concrete implementation of the Transnational Public Private Partnerships (TPPPs) scheme, contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 17 concerning global partnerships (Rusmawati & Rasyidah, 2023). The contribution of this collaboration is not merely understood as fulfilling normative indicators, but rather as a dynamic process involving capacity transfer, cross-border resource mobilization, and the establishment of multi-stakeholder governance mechanisms (Pujiati et al., 2025). Within the TPPPs framework, the ITDC-Dorna Sports partnership serves as a medium for integrating national development interests with the international sports regime and global market logic. Therefore, an analysis of this collaboration's contribution to SDG 17 needs to be understood through three main dimensions: capacity building, resource mobilization, and multi-stakeholder governance, which represent the core of sustainable global partnerships.

The contribution to capacity building is clearly visible through various capacity-building programs accompanying the implementation of the Mandalika MotoGP. Research findings indicate that the ITDC and Dorna Sports collaboration extends beyond physical infrastructure development to strengthening the institutional and social capacity of the local community. The local human resource training program, InJourney Hospitality House (IHH), involving ITDC, PT Angkasa Pura I, and relevant stakeholders, focuses on enhancing the competency of the hospitality, restaurant, and tourism sector to international standards in the lead-up to MotoGP. Furthermore, ITDC collaborates with the Mandalika Grand Prix Association (MGPA) to conduct specialized training for chiefs, chief marshals, and race control teams, covering operational theory, track incident management, and technical coordination for international racing (Drianawati, 2023). These programs demonstrate the transfer of international standards and best practices in global sporting event management to local stakeholders.

These capacity-building efforts also extend to the social and educational realms through the "Riders Go to School" program, organized by ITDC and Dorna Sports, which brings MotoGP riders to schools around Mandalika. This program aims to instill the values of sportsmanship, driving safety, and insight into the global sports industry in students (Darmansyah et al., 2023). On the technical side, the Mandalika Circuit track improvement and homologation process is carried out continuously to meet the safety and technical standards of the Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme (FIM), which reflects an institutional learning process based on global standards (Kurniawan et al., 2024). In the 2025 MotoGP, ITDC is recorded to absorb up to 2,073 workers in various sectors, with 380 marshals trained directly by FIM instructors and more than 2,000 volunteers involved in event operations, all of whom come from the local community of NTB (ITDC, 2025). Conceptually,

these findings demonstrate the implementation of SDG 17.9 on capacity building in developing countries through international cooperation, as emphasized in the TPPPs framework.

However, this study also found that the distribution of capacity building benefits is not entirely equitable. Several critical studies indicate that the involvement of marginalized communities around the Mandalika area in training programs remains limited, potentially widening the social capacity gap (Rahaju, 2025). This situation indicates that although the ITDC-Dorna Sports collaboration has made a positive contribution to SDG 17.9, inclusivity remains a structural challenge that needs to be strengthened. From a tourism diplomacy perspective, this capacity-building program remains strategically valuable because hosting international sporting events can serve as an instrument of Indonesia's soft power, strengthening its image and bargaining power at the regional and global levels (Drianawati, 2023).

In addition to capacity building, the ITDC-Dorna Sports collaboration's contribution to SDG 17 is also reflected in resource mobilization. Resource mobilization is a crucial element of global partnerships as it relates to the accumulation and management of resources for sustainable development. Empirical data shows that the development of basic infrastructure and productive assets in the Mandalika Special Economic Zone (SEZ) will require approximately IDR 9.25 trillion in funding by 2026, with IDR 750 billion in State Capital Participation (PMN), while the remainder will come from international investment and loans. One of the primary funding sources is the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) through the Mandalika Urban & Tourism Infrastructure Project (MUTIP) scheme, valued at USD 248.4 million (ITDC, 2020). Furthermore, the construction of the Mandalika street circuit involves investment from Vinci Construction Grands Projects (VCGP) through the signing of a strategic cooperation agreement with ITDC.

The trend of increasing investment in the Mandalika SEZ has strengthened since the MotoGP season, with realized investment in the first half of 2025 reaching IDR 40.48 trillion, an increase of approximately 29 percent compared to the same period the previous year (Hanggarini et al., 2025). In addition to mobilizing financial resources, the collaboration with Dorna Sports also provides strategic non-material resources in the form of a global reputation, an international sponsorship network, and global media exposure through MotoGP broadcasting rights. Promoting MotoGP as a positive sustainability ecosystem strengthens Mandalika's position as a competitive global tourism destination (Hamid et al., 2025). These findings indicate that resource mobilization within the framework of SDGs 17.3 and 17.6 encompasses not only financial aspects but also the mobilization of knowledge, technology, and international networks.

However, as emphasized by Widjaja & Dhanudibroto (2025), the effectiveness of resource mobilization in international partnerships is highly dependent on transfer, management, and accountability mechanisms at the national and local levels. In the Mandalika context, increased investment carries the risk of dependence on international actors and sponsors, potentially reducing local control over strategic resources. Therefore, the contribution of the ITDC-Dorna Sports collaboration to resource mobilization needs to be assessed not only by the investment size but also by the partnership's ability to maintain a balance between national development interests and global market dynamics.

The third dimension of this collaboration's contribution to SDG 17 lies in the aspect of multi-stakeholder governance, which is at the heart of SDGs 17.16 and 17.17. The implementation of the Mandalika MotoGP involves various state and non-state actors, ranging from the central government, local governments, state-owned enterprises, multinational companies, and local communities. This cross-actor coordination mechanism was evident, for example, in the review process for the Mandalika circuit development, which involved the CEO of Dorna Sports along with representatives of the central and local governments (Drianawati, 2023). This coordination pattern is designed to integrate development, commercial, and social interests within a shared governance framework, reflecting the key characteristics of the TPPPs.

However, research findings also indicate that multi-stakeholder governance practices in the Mandalika Special Economic Zone (SEZ) context still face the dilemma of multi-level governance. Relations between actors occur within an unbalanced power structure, where decision-making and resource control tend to be dominated by central actors, while space for local community participation is relatively limited. This finding aligns with research by Febriansyah et al. (2025), which shows that multi-stakeholder collaboration in sporting events is often instrumental and oriented toward short-term event success, without being accompanied by strengthening sustainable participatory governance. Thus, although the ITDC-Dorna Sports collaboration is normatively aligned with the principles of the TPPPs and the SDG 17 agenda, its effectiveness in building fair, transparent, and inclusive multi-stakeholder governance still requires institutional improvements and stronger participation mechanisms.

Tourism Diplomacy and the Limits of SDG 17

Tourism diplomacy through international collaboration between ITDC and Dorna Sports serves as a soft power instrument aimed at achieving the sustainable development agenda, specifically SDG 17 (Drianawati, 2023). This sub-topic will discuss this collaboration in organizing the MotoGP event in Mandalika using the conceptual framework of tourism diplomacy and Transnational Public-Private Partnerships (TPPPs), and

examine the limits of its contribution to SDG 17. In this article's research, SDG 17 is not understood solely as an indicator of normative success, but rather as an arena for negotiating interests between public and private actors in global tourism and sports governance.

Tourism diplomacy in the context of organizing the MotoGP event in Mandalika, as understood by Rusmawati & Rasyidah (2023) as presented in the previous literature review chapter, can be interpreted as a strategy or effort undertaken by the Indonesian Government through ITDC to establish collaboration or partnership with Dorna Sports to strengthen mutually beneficial relationships and as a means of introducing Indonesian humanitarian and cultural values to the international arena. The ITDC collaboration with Dorna Sports demonstrates how tourism is used to build relationships, transfer global standards, and strengthen Indonesia's position within the international sports regime. SDG 17 serves as a normative goal that legitimizes this cross-actor and cross-national collaboration.

However, research findings indicate that the ITDC-Dorna Sports collaboration's contribution to SDG 17 is contradictory. On the one hand, the collaboration contributes to capacity building, resource mobilization, and multi-stakeholder governance. However, on the other hand, the collaboration creates a power imbalance between domestic public and international private actors, where market logic and global standards tend to dominate the decision-making process. This finding aligns with Yudiana et al. (2021), who stated that SDG 17 is often perceived as an "enabling framework" without any evaluation of the distribution of benefits, power imbalances, and the various real challenges in implementing cross-sector partnerships.

From a TPPPs perspective, the collaboration between ITDC and Dorna Sports demonstrates the effectiveness of transnational partnerships by combining public and private resources, but also highlights their limitations. As explained in the book "Partnerships for Sustainability in Contemporary Global Governance," actors in partnerships often negotiate from differing positions of power, so the effectiveness of the partnership ultimately depends on the patterns of benefit distribution and the bargaining power of the actors involved (Andonova et al., 2022). This opens up space to understand how resource inequality and bargaining power can influence the outcomes of cross-actor and cross-national collaboration.

Furthermore, the collaboration's contribution to SDG 17 also relates to soft power aspects. The successful hosting of the MotoGP event in Mandalika strengthens Indonesia's image as a trustworthy partner in international cooperation, particularly at the regional level. This aligns with Devendra's (2025) findings, which demonstrate that mega-event sports act as soft power instruments that can strengthen a country's position and narrative in international relations. However, the legitimacy of mega-event-based tourism diplomacy remains contingent on the extent to which its benefits are felt by local communities. Without strengthened domestic governance and equitable distribution of benefits, tourism diplomacy risks being perceived as an elitist project (Pattaray et al., 2025). Theoretically, these findings confirm that SDG 17 is best understood as an analytical tool for interpreting the TPPPs, rather than as a sole indicator of global partnership success. In the context of the Mandalika MotoGP, contributions to SDG 17 are limited and contextual, reflecting the complexity of transnational partnership governance in an international system characterized by structural inequality.

4. CONCLUSION

This study finds that the collaboration between the Indonesia Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) and Dorna Sports in organizing the Mandalika MotoGP is a concrete manifestation of Transnational Public-Private Partnerships (TPPPs) within the framework of tourism diplomacy that selectively contribute to the achievement of SDG 17. This partnership demonstrates a complementary but asymmetrical division of roles, with ITDC playing a dominant role in providing infrastructure, regulation, and area management, while Dorna Sports controls technical aspects, global legitimacy, and international market networks. This finding provides an important lesson that the effectiveness of TPPPs is not determined by equal financial contributions, but rather by the ability of the actors involved to strategically manage dependencies, power relations, and cross-border resource exchanges. From a theoretical perspective, this study strengthens the understanding that SDG 17 is more appropriately understood as an arena for negotiating global interests and governance, rather than simply a normative indicator of success. Practically, the results of this study confirm that international sporting mega-events can be instruments of development and soft power, but their benefits depend heavily on governance design, inclusive capacity building, and equitable distribution of benefits to local communities. The main strength of this study lies in its ability to integrate the TPPPs framework, tourism diplomacy, and SDG 17 in a single, contextual empirical analysis, thus enriching the literature on transnational public-private partnerships in the global tourism and sports sectors. This study not only updates the perspective that tends to view the Mandalika MotoGP as a mere economic or destination promotion project, but also introduces it as an arena of transnational governance fraught with power relations, negotiation of interests, and the limits of sustainable development. However, this study has limitations, primarily because it focuses on a single specific case in the Mandalika Special Economic Zone (SEZ) with a qualitative approach based on secondary data and limited interviews. Therefore, it does not

fully capture the diversity of local community experiences, gender and age differences, and long-term post-event dynamics. Therefore, further research with a cross-site comparative approach, broader survey methods, and a focus on social inclusivity is urgently needed to obtain a more comprehensive picture and can serve as a basis for formulating more equitable, sustainable, and targeted global partnership policies.

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