The unexpected disruptions of 2020 may have put the sporting world on pause, but Laser Run has been a catalyst for growth of the UIPM Sports movement across South Asia that will continue once the restrictions on mass-participation sport have been eased.

From Kabul to Colombo, this part of the world has energetically embraced the simple plug-and-play format that enables Laser Run to support development in communities right across the planet.

In the fourth part of the Laser Run Spotlight series, we speak to senior office-bearers from National Federations in Afghanistan, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka (combined population circa 1.7billion) to find out more about their progressive grassroots initiatives, built on the platform of the UIPM Global Laser Run City Tour.
Afghanistan: Students and soldiers provide a bedrock of participants

Q: Do you involve national and local governments and government organizations in Laser Run events? In which aspects do they participate?

A: Yes, absolutely. Due to the lack of facilities in the country for other sports like Triathle or Biathle, we have... Laser Run equipment to organise more events in every part of India.

Q: How often did you organise Laser Run events in your country in 2019 and what was the average number of participants per event?

A: We received a great response on the younger age categories. A few parents approached us and offered to get their... camps to enhance their skills. Yet we do not charge any registration fee from the athletes for any of our local events.

Q: Can you please share with other (mainly new) countries some of your strategic goals?

A: We have participants from all age groups such as kids, youths and Masters athletes in our Laser Run events and we have... organisations in every state of India where they are responsible for the development of Modern Pentathlon regionally.

India: A nationwide approach across all age groups

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President, Modern Pentathlon Federation of Afghanistan

Laser Run is one of the important events for our organisation and we are getting a very good response from all parts of... like to work with UIPM to be able to provide enough Laser Run equipment to organise more events in every part of India.

The format allows and attracts athletes from other sports to test their skills and fitness through this platform.

Pakistan: It's time to take a multi-lateral approach

A: Specifically talking about the GLRCT format there are many positive impacts and outcome advantages for our National Federation. A few of them that we learned from our experience include:

- The format of GLRCT is very simple and very attractive for athletes (professional, non-professional and beginners).

- While providing all technical assistance under UIPM observation we will organise a local event according to international standards.

- We need technical training from UIPM for setting up the competition equipment according to international competition requirements.

- We need more UIPM-recognised referees and coaches in each South Asian country.

- The expectations of organisers was very high, but due to the issues the MPFI core committee took time to evaluate the... fixing the issues and covering for the financial losses of 2017-18 we missed our deadlines of application for 2019 GLRCT.

- We would especially suggest that we can revive this culture once again. We can still add an annual South Asian competition as a UIPM Calendar event, and we would like to work with UIPM to develop the following outcomes:

- We need to set up efficient scoring equipment in each discipline to avoid any dispute as we are using manual time records targeted to each athlete. For Triathle and, gradually, Tetrathlon, we can add Fencing and Riding.

- We do have a plan, but not at least for the next two years! We are looking for the facilities to enable us to organise... expansion for our development. We also need more UIPM-recognised coaches and referees to organise a good development of Laser Run in our country.

- The format of Laser Run is very attractive for athletes and the public.

Sri Lanka: Going beyond Laser Run in search of the ultimate athlete

A: At the moment we conduct GLRCT and BTNT segments in a single day, with Laser Run offered for Under-15s and BTNT for... the participants can be reached to improve their skills in Laser Run.

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Secretary General, Modern Pentathlon Federation of India

President, Sri Lanka Modern Pentathlon Federation

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