



Implementing development goals: Sport in the context of displacement

1. Sport for Development

One of the goals of German development policy is to harness the power of sport and exercise more effectively in international development cooperation (DC) activities. The aim is to create opportunities for personal development for people of all ages and to strengthen social cohesion.

Sport activities with a social and educational component can raise awareness in a wide range of areas – not only among the children and young people taking part, but also among coaching staff. These areas include education, health, peace and the environment as well as cross-cutting issues such as gender and inclusion. By creating structured opportunities for participation, activities in the field of sport can also help to strengthen civil society; a further priority area in German development cooperation.

When used in a targeted way, sport can play an important role above and beyond the development of physical skills. It can promote the transfer of learning and can be used as an instrument of education. It can contribute to preventing HIV/AIDS and violence and has a positive impact on the physical and mental well-being of children and young people in general. And finally, it provi-

des participants with the opportunity to learn life skills that will help them overcome difficult situations in their everyday lives and improve their prospects for the future.

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) commissioned the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH with the implementation of the sector programme 'Sport for Development', with the aim of making a significant contribution in this area and developing effective ways of using sport in German development cooperation activities.

In a total of five country components across three continents, approaches and methods have been tested and further developed together with the project's partners. The 'sport for development' approach is also being implemented in two new regional projects.

The United Nations outcome docu-



ment ‘Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’ highlights the important role sport has to play in enabling sustainable development and emphasises the contribution it can make to development, peace, health, education and social inclusion.

Promoting sport in the context of refugee movements and forced displacement contributes directly to achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 3 (Health), 4 (Education), 5 (Gender equality), 10 (Reduced inequality within and among countries) and especially 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions).

This paper provides practitioners and theorists operating in the field of development cooperation with an overview of the ways in which sport can be used in the context of displacement. It introduces the different approaches and priority areas, offers insight into the practical lessons learned and results achieved so far and presents example projects. The Sector Project ‘Sport for Development’ also offers additional materials as well as advice on mainstreaming the approach in the context of displacement and migration and on the use of sport in other sectors.

2. Background

According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there are currently more than 65 million forcibly displaced persons worldwide, and many more are on the move.

People leave their regions of origin for economic, social, political, demographic and environmental reasons as well as to escape violent

conflict and human rights abuses.

Migration can take place via regulated, legal immigration channels or via irregular channels. Displacement (both internal and international) can put people in dangerous and sometimes life-threatening situations. For this reason,

Sport creates safe spaces for interaction among refugees, internally displaced persons and host communities.

refugees primarily require protection, which is guaranteed under international refugee law. Internally displaced persons also need protection, though this is currently not an absolute right under international law.

The contexts in which people migrate and integrate themselves into host societies differ, but there are many recurring features. All migrants, including refugees, find themselves in new and unfamiliar surroundings. Together with the host society, they face the challenge of shaping integration efforts, so that they can begin to participate socially, culturally and economically. Those returning to their home countries also face considerable challenges.

UNHCR figures show that around 86% of refugees seek refuge in developing countries, generally close to their region of origin. The arrival of large numbers of refugees in a short space of time causes significant problems in host regions, especially in developing countries. These include shortages of accommodation and employment opportunities, insufficient capacity in schools and scarcity of water and food.

In light of the large number of ongoing displacement situations and the associated potential for social conflict, more and more host countries





are recognising the need for effective integration approaches. Successful management of the ‘refugee crisis’ is a top priority for German development policy, as demonstrated by the launch of the BMZ’s special initiative on ‘Tackling the root causes of displacement, reintegrating refugees’. The aims of the initiative include addressing the root causes of displacement, creating prospects for the future and employment opportunities, stabilising host regions, and (re-)integrating refugees and internally displaced persons.

German development cooperation projects have not yet systematically applied the ‘sport for development’ approach in the context of refugee movements and displacement. There is significant potential in this area, as sport can play an important supporting role in this context in a variety of ways. Sport improves health and well-being, helps participants develop important life skills, promotes social cohesion and can contribute as a means of supporting conflict management. It provides refugees and internally displaced persons with a welcome distraction from their everyday lives, which are often both difficult and monotonous. Sport can play a role across various sectors and can be combined with a wide range of thematic areas such as health or education. It can also be an effective

instrument in the context of migration and returnee programmes.

‘Sport for development’ activities can stimulate exchange and social interaction among refugees, internally displaced persons and host communities. They can be used in refugee camps and in other situations. As these activities are often especially appealing to children and young people, they can achieve a very broad impact and open up further opportunities. They can be carried out together with both state and civil society actors, which can lead to better cooperation in other areas, increasing the chances of

Sport boosts self-confidence and helps people to recover from traumatic experiences.

success in otherwise highly charged displacement contexts.

The ‘Sport for Development’ project uses participant-oriented, participatory and active teaching and learning methods, can be an effective complement to traditional teaching curricula and provides teaching staff with the opportunity to expand the range of methodological and pedagogical instruments at their disposal.

Jordan und Iraq

Education and conflict management through sport

Since 2011, the war in Syria and the rise of the terrorist organisation Islamic State have driven millions of people from their homes. By mid-2016, there were more than 655,000 officially registered Syrian refugees in Jordan – although the actual number is estimated to be more than twice as high. Around 250,000 refugees fled to Iraq in 2016, while 46,000 Iraqi nationals returned to their homeland from Syria. In addition, there are over three million internally displaced persons in Iraq. Most of those who have fled violence live in host communities outside the refugee camps. The aim of the regional project ‘Exchange, education and conflict management through sport’, which has been running since 2016, is to provide opportunities for internally displaced persons, refugees and local people in Iraqi and Jordanian refugee camps and host communities to engage in sporting activities together in a safe environment. As well as training their sporting abilities, this nurtures respect, tolerance, discipline, empathy, fair play and self-confidence. Together with the Jordan Football Association (JFA), the Asian Football Development



Project (AFDP) and the University of Jordan, a training concept is being developed to promote physical and mental well-being through sport. The project builds on experience gained from projects in South Africa, Colombia and Brazil. 240 teachers and coaches are receiving training, half of whom are women. In Jordan, sports programmes are being run in 60 schools and 40 municipalities, with around 10,000 children and young people taking part. In northern Iraq, measures are planned that will enable around 65,000 children and young people in camps for refugees and internally displaced persons and in youth centres to participate in sports activities.

21-year-old Maryana Haddad (below) plays for the Jordanian national women’s football team. Having completed training courses as part of the ‘Sport for Development’-project, Maryana



now offers coaching herself ‘I quickly recognised the enormous potential of the project concept. The idea of specifically combining professional football training with personal development is new to Jordan. And it’s much more fun working with children in this way and watching them develop, regardless of their nationality, age or gender. As coach, I’m also learning a lot about my function as a role model for the kids – both on and off the pitch.’

3. Approaches and priority areas

Sport can be used as an instrument at various levels in the context of displacement. Options include both short-term measures to support refugees, internally displaced persons and host communities and long-term measures that aim to improve people's prospects for a self-determined life and foster the development of corresponding structures.

The following approaches can be effective at the individual level:

Sport gives refugees and internally displaced persons the opportunity to channel stress and aggression in a constructive way.

- Sport can create a secure and neutral space, facilitating the constructive use of leisure time, reducing stress and aggression and helping participants to process traumatic experiences. Health-related components and awareness-raising can also be incorporated into sports activities.
- In refugee camps and host communities alike, girls and young women often lack the opportunity to interact with each other. Sports facilities can be used as safe spaces in which to discuss topics such as reproductive health and rights.
- Sports activities can be used to promote values. They can also help participating children and young people, as well as coaches, to develop important personal and social skills and self-confidence. In addition, regular training can help structure daily life and provide elements of fun



and excitement in an otherwise often monotonous existence.

- In camps or host communities in which some children and young people do not have access to

Sport opens up new prospects and builds a spirit of community.

a formal education, 'sport for development' can be a particularly effective way of providing extracurricular educational input. Integrated into formal lessons, sport and exercise can also be a useful tool when working with large, heterogeneous groups.

- Sport can be used to open up new prospects for refugees – for example, by helping them develop skills such as communication, discipline and teamwork that will improve their chances in the job market. Combining sport with careers guidance measures can also increase the appeal of vocational education programmes

The following approaches can be effective at the societal level:

- Sport creates a neutral space in which individuals (from different ethnic or religious backgrounds, for example) or groups (such as host communities and refugees) can come together, interact and build mutual trust.
- Especially for refugees, who have been forced to leave familiar surroundings, sport can be a useful way of developing social relationships, friendships and a sense of belonging. It improves communication, interaction and integration



Kenya

Violence prevention through sport in a refugee context

Kenya has taken in around 500,000 refugees from neighbouring countries. The refugee camp at Kakuma provides shelter to people from a wide range of ethnic, social and cultural backgrounds. Living together in such close proximity can often lead to conflict, both among refugees and with the local population. Opportunities for personal development for young people at the camp are limited. There are just 20 primary schools to cater for the approximately 73,000 children at Kakuma.



In 2014, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH was commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) to implement the 'Sport for Development in Africa' (S4DA) project. The aim was to establish sport as a tool for achieving development goals in selected African countries. The project's focus in Kenya is on using the 'sport for development' approach to prevent violence by promoting social skills and values. This approach is being implemented in Kakuma/Turkana West not only in the context of refugees and the host population, but also to strengthen non-governmental organisations (NGOs) throughout Kenya. Sports education activities facilitate participation and create a sense of solidarity that transcends ethnic and social boundaries. In collaboration with

partner organisations, concepts for teaching violence prevention through sport are being developed and integrated into regular coaching measures. At the same time, existing sports grounds are being rehabilitated and new ones constructed. Selected schools are being provided with coaching kits (including balls, cones and bibs).

In Turkana West, S4DA works closely with the project 'Support for refugees, especially voluntary returnees, and host communities in Kenya', which is funded by the Special Initiative on Displacement. Drawing on context-specific expertise and in coordination with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Special Initiative on Displacement ensures that measures are implemented in a conflict-sensitive manner. The sports activities organised by the project provide opportunities for interaction among refugees and local people. In the 2016 school holidays, around 160 children and young people from the local and refugee communities took part in week-long sports camps led by trained coaches and designed to help prevent violence.

Sito Lotulo Inyasio Longera is a 30-year-old teacher from Kakuma. Having fled South Sudan, he now works as a coach on the 'Sport for Development' project. He knows from experience how important sport can be to refugees: 'Sport is the number one activity in both the host and refugee communities. For me, playing football has been an important means of social interaction.' As a coach, he is particularly pleased to see members of the host and refugee communities having no difficulty playing either in the same team or against each other, as they know how to handle conflicts both on and off the pitch.

and counteracts feelings of isolation.

- Planning and organising sports activities and ‘sport for development’ measures requires the involvement of schools, sports clubs, local organisations and governments. Sport provides a neutral platform for strengthening these organisations and encouraging cooperation between them, and enables refugees, internally displaced persons and local communities to create the necessary structures for participation.

4. Lessons learned and results achieved

The Sector Project ‘Sport for Development’ has been working in the context of refugee movements and displacement for a number of years, alongside other sports projects carried out within the scope of German development cooperation. Although this work in the host countries has not been without its challenges, the core principle of involving refugees, internally displaced persons and the local population in its activities and using sport as a way of bringing people from different backgrounds together has always been respected. Conflict-sensitive planning and design, in accordance with the ‘do no harm’ principle, is at the heart of all the projects carried out in this field. In many cases, facilitators such as teachers, social workers and coaches also have been involved in joint training measures.

Within the context of refugee movements and displacement, it has often been possible to combine sport with other thematic areas. In Kenya (see project example on page 6) and Colombia, for instance, the emphasis is on peacebuilding and the prevention of violence. In Colombia, 500 teachers and coaches have received training in the ‘Fútbol con principios’ methodology, enabling them to make a contribution to the local integration of internally displaced persons and help children and young people across the country to explore non-violent ways of resolving conflicts.

In the Palestinian territories, the primary focus is on improving the prospects of young people. Sport is used as a means of fostering skills that are valued on the job market and strengthening

the range of vocational education options on offer. With support from the German Federal Foreign Office, work is also being carried out in the area of stress management and trauma relief. Within this project, 20 coaches are learning to improve the mental well-being of participants using basic warm-up exercises or group discussions about specific game situations.

Sport can be used to address important topics relating to health or vocational education.

Trauma and stress management is also an area of focus for activities in Turkey and the regional projects in Jordan and northern Iraq. By the end of 2017, 140 young Syrian and Turkish nationals in Turkey will have gained the necessary skills to act as multipliers for ‘Sport for Development’ projects. This will enable up to 7,000 children and young people to benefit from sports-based approaches and will encourage intercultural exchange and peaceful coexistence between Syrian refugees and their host communities. While it is clear that sport cannot be a substitute for the work of psychologists or other forms of support, it has been shown that the provision of a safe and neutral space, combined with opportunities for physical activity, fun, the development of community spirit and the targeted use of appropriate physical education methods, can make a very significant contribution to the well-being of children and young people in particular.

In addition to this, coaches can act as intermediaries for other forms of psychological support. Awareness-raising measures and training for coaches are of particular importance here, along with activities to strengthen the relevant organisations.

For further information and advice, please do not hesitate to contact us!

E-Mail: sport-for-development@giz.de

Website: www.giz.de/sport-for-development



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Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 36+40	Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1-5
53113 Bonn, Germany	65760 Eschborn, Germany
T +49 228 4460-0	T +49 61 96 79-0
F +49 228 4460-1766	F +49 61 96 79-11 15

Contact:
Sektorvorhaben Sport für Entwicklung
sport-for-development@giz.de

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