

European Football for



Development Network

EFDN



Welcome
through football

PRACTITIONER'S GUIDE

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Erasmus+ Programme
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INTRODUCTION WELCOME THROUGH FOOTBALL

BEST PRACTICES HANDBOOK

The Welcome Through Football 2021 project aimed to assist the integration and inclusion of recently arrived young refugees, asylum seekers and others with a migrant background.

To successfully develop this project, EFDN have analysed and reviewed the earlier Welcome Through Football 2019 project in great detail, taking key learnings and refining best practices to provide even greater value to communities across Europe. Using this information, EFDN has developed and tested a European methodology that uses football as a tool to reach refugees and migrants from different ages (7-25 years old) to encourage them to become physically and socially active in European communities. The project also trained staff members of participating organisations in this new methodology and through this Welcome Through Football Practitioners Guide we are aiming to share information even more widely by making it freely accessible to all interested sport clubs and organisations in Europe.





Welcome through football

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this Welcome Through Football project was to provide at least 675 young refugees and asylum seekers capacity building opportunities, to achieve inclusive and peaceful societies, to share best practice programmes and methodologies, and identify critical success factors so that the project can be replicated beyond the initial programme. It further developed a comprehensive three step social inclusion methodology, which can be used by professional and grassroots football clubs in the delivery of football-based community programmes to support the inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers and promote the acceptance of refugees and immigrants into European society.

The main partner goals of the programme were:

- 1 To develop a local Welcome Through Football programme for young refugees, asylum seekers and young people with a migrant background.
- 2 To promote the benefits for these groups of being physically and socially active in their communities.
- 3 To raise awareness about a healthier lifestyle and how being physically and socially active will benefit participants and their communities.
- 4 To facilitate the integration of people from disadvantaged groups within local communities.

THE AIMS OF THE PRACTITIONERS GUIDE

The goal of this Welcome through Football Practitioners Guide is to provide the necessary information for any football club or sports organisation to design, implement and monitor their own project aimed at refugees and asylum seekers using the Welcome through Football methodology.

This guide contains key information that will help readers design their own project by adapting the content of this manual factoring in their resources and needs. The creation of this Practitioners Guide has been possible thanks to contributions from the Welcome through Football project partners who tested the project methodology in their communities in England, Scotland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Portugal and Greece.

The contributions to this manual have been provided by Everton in the Community, Sheffield United Community Foundation, Werder Bremen, Newcastle United Foundation, AEK Athens FC, Benfica Foundation, Big Hearts Community Trust, KAA Gent Foundation and FC Emmen Naoberschap.

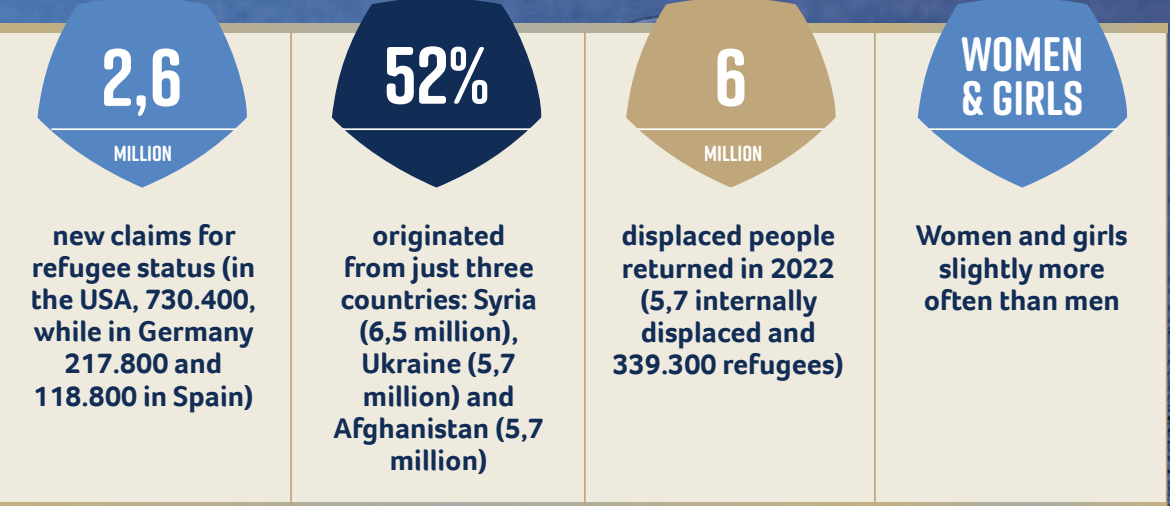
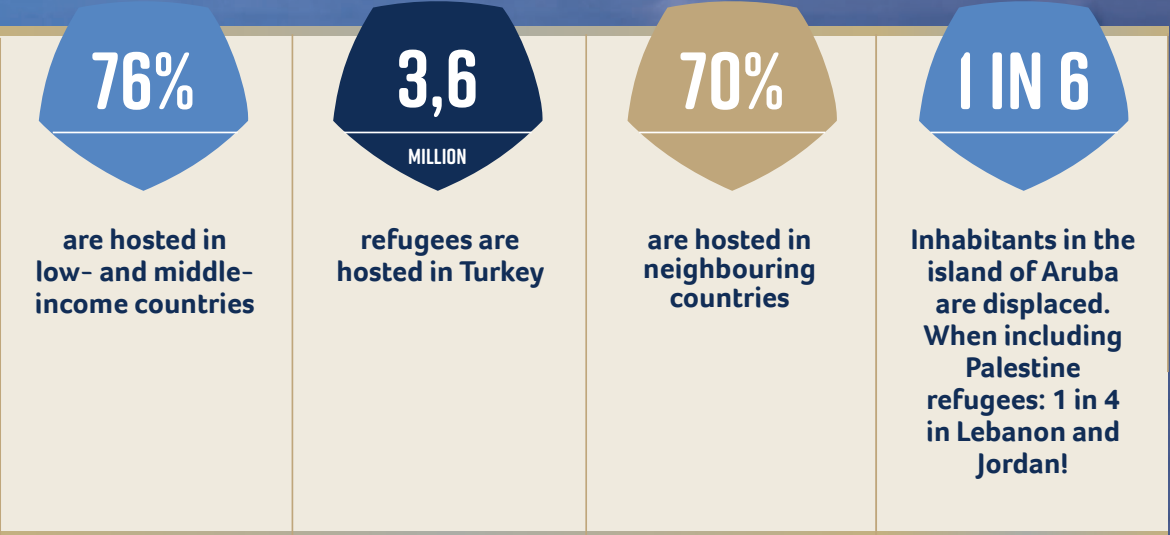
DID YOU KNOW?

According to the UN Global Trends Report about 2022, there are 108,4 million forcibly people displaced worldwide:



At the closing of this Practitioners Guide, the UN Refugee Agency announced via their Instagram page that at their Mid-Year report there were 114 million forcibly displaced people. This is the highest level since records exist.

Some numbers around the 2022 report:



THE WELCOME THROUGH FOOTBALL METHODOLOGY

EFDN developed and tested a three-step methodology to support refugees to integrate in European society:

Each step has its own purpose, partner requirements, and challenges; the below is a summary, with more detailed information

about different challenges and proposed solutions later in this guide. In addition to this document, EFDN also produced a 'Best Practice Handbook' which gives further information about how this framework was developed and examples of other projects which may provide inspiration or partnership opportunities.

| <p>STEP 1</p> <p>SOCIALISATION TO SPORTS</p> | <p>STEP 2</p> <p>SOCIALISATION IN SPORTS</p> | <p>STEP 3</p> <p>SOCIALISATION THROUGH SPORTS</p> |
|---|--|--|
| <p>In this phase the key task is to engage participants with your sessions, helping them to build networks in their new community and enjoy playing sport.</p> <p>Over 12 weeks football is used to overcome both physical inactivity and social isolation, primarily through simply playing the game in a fun and safe environment. You can also introduce further activities such as beginning to introduce language lessons or offering support in dealing with traumatic experience. The overall aim is to establish a positive relationship with the participants and to build a platform in preparation for Steps 2 and 3.</p> <p>As this will be the start of the programme it is the one requiring the most organisation, especially when running Welcome through Football for the first time; you will need to source staff, kit and equipment, venue(s), as well as finding your participant group. Due to the involvement of refugees/ asylum seekers, organisers need to be fully aware of particular challenges, such as the importance of location, additional kit requirements, language barriers or psychological support. To create an effective programme it is likely that you will need to establish a number of new partnerships and additional time will be required in the project planning phase.</p> | <p>The primary focus of Step 2 is to start building skillsets of participants, using the sports setting to provide a safe space to develop their abilities and grow in confidence.</p> <p>In addition to the weekly football sessions, participants engage more widely in the sports environment, taking on additional roles to 'player'. Chosen activities will depend on the group and their particular needs/age/gender and your own local context.</p> <p>It is often in this phase that local language is specifically taught; other skills that you could work on include management/ mentoring, for example having participants take on coaching/refereeing roles, either within their own group or potentially working with others at your club/ foundation. A great opportunity might be new Welcome through Football participants just starting Step 1; you could also include them with off-field activities, such as asking them to help the organisation of the programme or other duties at your club. Some partners might be suitable to work alongside at this stage, but it is likely this will be predominantly club/foundation based.</p> <p>The introduction to a more structured programme, where they also have more responsibility than just turning up to play, will help develop individual learning paths to guide them to Step 3.</p> | <p>Step 3 is aimed at integrating refugees and asylum seekers into their wider communities, with a particular focus on preparing them for education, volunteer roles or employment, either inside or outside of sport.</p> <p>Again the activities will be based on individual need, your environment and available support – you may have to seek additional help from alternative sources. In some cases the focus may be guiding/ connecting individuals to the appropriate institution or employer for their next step, however, not all participants will be able to move directly into these settings, so instead your aim will be continuing to build general skills. The objective is to ensure that they are prepared and confident to make the next step and are able to integrate more fully in society.</p> <p>It is likely that partnerships will be an important asset at this stage; they might be the practitioner if running formal sessions, potential educator/employer or simply providing advice and guidance as per the needs of the individual/group. Perhaps your club is already running appropriate programmes (for example Scoring for Jobs Matchdays) that you can direct your participants towards. If the participant is keen to continue their footballing journey you can support their transition into a local grassroots team or coaching/refereeing programme with your local FA.</p> |

HOW TO PLAN YOUR WELCOME THROUGH FOOTBALL PROJECT

This part of the manual will guide you step by step how to implement a Welcome through Football programme for refugees and asylum seekers at your football club or foundation.

The following recommendations are aimed at football clubs, but they may be adjusted and used by other sport organisations.



RECRUITING STAFF

Recruiting staff can be time consuming and financially challenging for football clubs and foundations, especially for the smaller ones. For this type of project generally having coaches with a background in football, social work and familiar with the age range is recommended. If the coaches/ staff also have a migrant background themselves, they can act as a role model who can also inspire participants to join the programme and encourage them to continue training. There are different ways to find appropriate staff:

- 1 Use your current coaches:** the easiest way to start your Welcome through Football programme is by utilising your current human resources and using existing personnel as Welcome through Football coaches. The main reason behind this suggestion is that you already know these individuals, so you do not need to go through a full recruiting process, also the project may fall under their required duties with the club meaning salaries will not be an additional expense, which is especially beneficial if your budget is limited. In addition, you are aware of their abilities and suitability to work with the target participant group.
- 2 Hire qualified coaches:** If you decide to hire coaches specifically for the project the recruiting process should be demanding and rigorous. One of the main recommendations is to choose coaches who hold an appropriate coaching license and it is important to conduct checks into the candidates making sure they are appropriately skilled to work with players from a migrant background. Participants of the Welcome through Football project may have different challenges to other groups with many particularities to consider, such as language barriers, traumas, cultural barriers, financial constraints (as they are not able to do paid work), or simply the fear of being relocated again. All these factors need to be fully understood by the coaches, so they can either directly support their players or connect them with someone who can help them.

Use participants from the club or foundation (outside of the traditional coaching staff): for some organisations, using people who are involved in other roles/projects may be a great way to further engage staff or participants from other projects, giving them the possibility to return the support they receive from the club. Some examples might include:

- 3 Older players:** do you have a Walking Football project or other activities in the club for seniors? Depending on their suitability of working with refugees and asylum seekers, they could be a coach (either head or assistant), or they can act as referees, or help you run other events for your Welcome through Football programme such as building employability skills
- 4 Young leaders:** do you have a programme in which you help young participants find opportunities to make an impact? Similar to the older participants, they could become coaches for Welcome through Football, or share their experiences in education and early employment.
- 5 Club fans:** you can also find potential staff from your fanbase. Working for your club or foundation may be a dream for them. Once again, we recommend that they are familiar with.
- 6 Current and former Welcome through Football participants:** if you have been running the programme for one or more years, you can find staff from within the project, they are the best role models for the newcomers and know better than anyone what are the challenges that the participants may be facing. If you are starting a new project, you can also approach current or former refugees/migrants from your other projects, or your local refugee centre/partners may know someone who has the right skills. If hiring refugee/ asylum seekers/ migrants, even as volunteers, ensure that you are familiar with your local legislation and their right to work as this may be restrictive for some.



RECRUITING PARTICIPANTS

Most European towns and cities have refugee or asylum seeker populations; however, their numbers may differ making the recruitment process easier/ harder depending on the club context. Some ideas of how to reach potential participants include:

1

Refugee agencies: whether it is the national agency, the regional or local agency, or another NGO, linking with organisations working with refugees will be the best way to start. In addition to finding your potential participants through them, you will be able to share best practices and learn directly from their experience. This may include organisations such as the Red Cross.

2

Foundation stakeholders: share your project with others at your club and communicate that you are looking for participants, as they may already be engaging with your target group in different settings. These conversations can also lead to other opportunities if your aims are aligned, such as funding/ sponsorship, shared resources or off-pitch support (for example education sessions).

3

Local refugee centres: going direct to the centres may be a preferred option, consider preparing a short presentation and speak with the staff at the centre about your project so they can advocate on your behalf. Having flyers to distribute can also be a useful tool.

4

Social media: share your project on your social media channels, including marketing campaigns or keep it simple with posters as not all refugees and asylum seekers will have access to the internet.

5

Social networks: use connections you have in the communities to pass on information to potential participants, for example once your programme is running current participants can recommend the programme to their friends or neighbours.

6

Other local organisations (not refugee specific): local government, job centres, universities, schools, shops or religious communities can all introduce Welcome through Football to their members/users; those working closely with individuals can pass on information directly to them, while a simple poster in these locations can help spread the word. Relevant locations: focus your attention on where refugee and asylum communities are based (this may be outside your usual target areas) to maximise chances of reaching potential participants.

EQUIPMENT AND VENUE

Arranging equipment for your Welcome through Football project can be a challenging task, not just sourcing the usual equipment of balls and cones, but many of your participants may not have basic kit, including football boots or shin pads. Finding a suitable venue can also be a barrier to success, as participants may not be able to afford to travel (or may be wary of visiting certain areas) so choosing

an appropriate location is crucial. These additional needs need to be considered when budgeting and resourcing your project.

Some ideas on how you can remove barriers and save costs on equipment and venues include:



USE YOUR OWN FOUNDATION/CLUB RESOURCES: venue availability is often a challenge but is often the cheapest option. Some clubs renew their equipment regularly so you could make use of what is being replaced, especially if it is still in reasonable condition rather than buying new. If your club has access to transport, for example a minibus, this can also be used to enable participants to get to the venue. Being at a club location or wearing club kit can help to forge stronger bonds with the participants and make them feel part of your community.



PARTNER WITH LOCAL SCHOOLS/GRASSROOTS CLUBS: you may be able to use their facilities for free or for a small fee. Make sure the venue is easily accessible to participants, also taking into consideration any cultural challenges, as discussed later in the guide specifically around female participation.



BUY IN BULK: buying larger amounts of football equipment and keeping it in reserve may be more expensive, but it will make it could be cheaper in the long term. You can give away some equipment and use it, rather than putting in multiple small orders when needed. Working with other projects/ partners could also help to share/reduce costs if they need similar items. you made.



PARTNER UP WITH OTHER NGOS OR REFUGEE CENTRES: they may have their own facilities and equipment that you could use to run the programme with their own participants. If they have facilities but they do not have equipment, you can suggest sharing the cost, with the partner having access outside the Welcome through Football sessions or keeping the items once no longer needed by the programme the cost.



USE YOUR OWN FOUNDATION/CLUB FACILITIES: although this may be challenging, you may be able to find a suitable time in which you can use the sports facilities and equipment. In some cases, clubs renew their equipment regularly, so you could make use of the old equipment if your budget does not allow you to buy new equipment. Link to a partner: more information about partnerships can be found below. In sum, if you can secure a partnership and receive funds for the equipment, you can print their logo on the equipment in exchange for the funds.



RENT FACILITIES ONLY WHEN NECESSARY: there may be free pitches that you can secure to run the programme, and it could be that these free pitches or fields do not have lighting. In this case, you may make use of these facilities during summer and spring time, when there is enough light time, and rent indoor or outdoor facilities for the winter, when you would need lights, consider changing locations at different times of the year; you may be able to use a facility for free in the summer when lights are not needed for example and therefore you will only pay for floodlit/weatherproof pitch when needed in winter months.



FIND A SPONSOR: consider if your project is suitable for sponsorship opportunities, such as putting a company name on training kit or adding their logo to social media posts etc. These may also become supporters of the project in other ways, for example they could host a participant as an intern/ employee as part of stage three.



MAXIMISE DONATIONS: target supporters, neighbours, players from the other club sections, or families think about who in your community may be able to donate money/or kit. Can you do a fundraising drive with supporters and sponsors or ask players and coaches from your club to pass on unwanted items, such as old training kit. You can make these donations go to each player, or you can have the equipment like boots or shin pads available on a per session basis (this means that each participant will borrow this equipment and leave it there until the next session) Consider how to distribute funds or equipment; do you give it to individual players, or can certain items be shared among different groups, for example boots may be kept by the player but bench jackets are commonly shared in teams. You can encourage the donors to include give beyond sports equipment, any item they may not need, not just sport equipment but also for example, everyday clothing, books or even food.



REWARD SYSTEM (WHEN YOU ALREADY RUN THE PROJECT):

to motivate participants in order to keep attendance, if you have plenty of equipment coming from your club, you can implement a system whereby away certain elements individual elements of the training kit to participants are only shared at certain intervals e.g. when they after regular attendance at show up to the sessions or reaching a particular progression point regularly. This not only encourages the individual by rewarding their commitment but reduces waste as items are not being shared with those who do not need them, improving resource management.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Being able to monitor and evaluate your impact is necessary to understand the impact of your activities, maximise your project and give participants the best possible outcomes.

The Welcome through Football project used the online Monitoring and Evaluation and Learning (MEL) tool 'Upshot', which helped each partner to collect quantitative and qualitative data about their participants and their sessions, for example monitoring participation via registers or sharing well-being questionnaires. The information collected thanks to Upshot included participant data (demographics), attendance data engagement), feedback data (quality), outcomes data (difference made through the project) and impact data (the difference in the long-term). These measurements assisted the clubs to shape their delivery.

EFDN converted this high-quality data and content to assess the overall effectiveness of the programme, identify key challenges and learn best practices which can now be shared with other organisations. Upshot is an online system which helps over 1000 organisations in the UK and worldwide to better manage their data, track progress and report against outcomes – all with the aim of evaluating their impact.

However, Upshot is more than a system; as an independent social enterprise with an acknowledged expertise in the field of impact measurement in football, sport and in the wider non-profit world, Upshot is dedicated to helping all organisations become better at Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL).

Everton in the Community (EitC) conducted a Social Return On Investment (SROI) analysis completed by industry experts 'RealWorth', analysing the impact of EitC's Welcome through Football programme. During 12 months, the programme generated a SROI value of £78.84 for every £1 invested equalling a total of £1,159,000 worth of social benefit to its participants and wider health economy (RealWorth SROI analysis, 2022).



OTHER CHALLENGES

In this guide we have already mentioned likely challenges to creating a Welcome through Football programme, such as recruiting staff and participants, or arranging equipment and facilities. In addition to these issues, clubs involved in the pilot project reported the following specific obstacles:

COMMUNICATION / LANGUAGE BARRIERS:

Language is the most common issue when it comes to accommodating refugees and asylum seekers. If participants use a language unknown to staff, it can mean that negative conversations or arguments between the participants can go unnoticed by the coaches. Alternatively, if participants use a language not understood by all it can create both intentional or unintentional divisions in the group. One solution to prevent both these issues is to set a rule in which players can only speak in an agreed language, usually the local language (which can also help participants to practice in a safe setting and become further integrated in their new community). It can also be a fun, but important, tool to run workshops focused on basic football language, helping participants navigate football drills and further develop relationships by having a shared understanding within the group. Clubs may look to recruit a coach or other support role who speaks the same language as the participant group and who can act as an interpreter. In some cases, this is impossible if many different languages are spoken, but one or two “role models” who already speak the local language can also help break down the barriers. Another issue in communication is sharing information away from the training environment, for example if a coach needs to change the time or location of a session, as often the best form of communication with the group is face-to-face, but this is not always possible. When it comes to written messages, translation into the main languages spoken by the group may be a helpful solution, keep messages concise to minimise translation issues. Creating group chats in text services or sending a group email can help to reduce miscommunication as others can correct any individual misunderstandings. It should also be remembered that not all refugees and asylum seekers will have access to phones or the internet, so you may have to find alternative means to get messages to them for example through family/friends or staff at their local asylum centre.

INVOLVING PARENTS:

For those who start a Welcome through Football programme aimed at younger participants, engaging with their parents may be a difficult task, possibly due to the language barrier or cultural/religious barriers, such as allowing girls to participate. One way to resolve this issue is to recruit a few parents who are interested in football and include them as volunteer coaches/ in other capacities (subject to status). Through this engagement they can become either formal or informal ambassadors for the project, motivating more parents to allow or encourage their children to take part.

FOOD POVERTY:

In some cases your Welcome through Football participants remain at risk of poverty, with limited options to generate their own income. The current global challenge associated with increased costs-of-living disproportionately affects vulnerable groups; as previously mentioned participants may not have money to attend your programme or buy their own boots, but a more immediate problem is if they cannot afford food. One solution to this is to launch a food pantry with your club or foundation, using club networks of fans and staff who can donate towards food parcels for participants (and other low-income groups in your communities) or linking up with food charities in your area. Another idea is to use your club canteens or local restaurants/takeaways to provide meals to participants as part of the session, also allowing them to take home any leftovers, both benefitting the participant and reducing food waste. Other partnerships could also be established, for example with supermarkets/markets who can share their surplus food either directly with participants or as part of the foodbank; these organisations can become further involved as overall sponsors or the project or as potential employers for participants reaching stage three of the programme.

RECRUITMENT OF FEMALE PARTICIPANTS:

Finding women/girls to join your Welcome through Football project may be challenging due to different factors which put further barriers in their way, often cultural or religious. Providing a separate women/girl session, further enhancing this with female staff members, is the simplest way to overcome this, however numbers, especially in the initial stages of the project, may mean this is not practical. As mentioned before, having a role model in a leadership position, for example a female coach, can encourage women and girls to attend mixed sessions to begin with. Asking them to bring friends/using their channels to further attract other women/girls, it might be possible to create female only sessions. There is more information about involving women and girls later in the guide.

EXPECTATION MANAGEMENT:

Some participants join the Welcome through Football project believing it to be a route to become professional footballers for your club and they do not fully understand that it is purely a recreational programme. It is therefore particularly important that you explain to participants the goals of the project, the role of the coaches and other project collaborators to avoid false expectations of the players.

CULTURAL/REGIONAL CONFLICTS:

Due to the variety of cultural and religious backgrounds that you can have when hosting a Welcome through Football project, it is possible that these differences can lead to friction between participants. One tip is to become familiar with any conflicts that may have taken place between the diverse groups attending your programme as this may help you be prepared if something happens in a session. In general, make sure you state clear rules with your participants, including zero tolerance to violence and discrimination and be transparent with the consequences of not following with this policy. In case of disputes for whatever reason, make sure you treat everyone fairly and do not make exceptions.

PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS/TRAUMA:

Most refugees and asylum seekers will go through trauma due to the difficult situations before, during, or after they are displaced. Some of these bad experiences turn into traumas that are difficult to manage, especially if the participants do not receive appropriate psychological help. While it is unlikely your football staff will be trained in this area, they should still be aware of and sensitive to the backgrounds of participants. Away from the pitch you should look to build partnerships with professionals, for example psychologists and social workers who can offer effective support and treatment.



RELIABILITY WITH ATTENDANCE/DROPOUTS:

Another frequent challenge arises from participants being unreliable, either having inconsistent attendance or dropping out of the programme altogether. There are two main reasons for this: one is that refugees and asylum seekers often get relocated, sometimes at short notice. Knowing they can be moved elsewhere (potentially to a new country), they may not see any benefit integrating into their current setting, making friends etc, if they fear having to leave it behind and especially if still suffering the original trauma of leaving family and friends in their homelands. The second reason is that some of them lack motivation to exercise, for several reasons, which is a common issue in all sport settings. To help overcome these issues, it is important to ensure that participants do not feel obligated to join, but rather that they are engaged with the wider value of the project. Listening to feedback regarding the sessions and what participants find enjoyable can also contribute to higher attendances. While there is little control over participants being moved, if there is some advanced warning then the club could help make new connections - perhaps former participants have also been moved to the new location, or you can contact clubs in the area that they can join, potentially in a similar programme. While communication may continue to be an issue as discussed above, keeping channels open can give participants a network and it may still be possible to offer support, even from afar.

TIMEKEEPING:

In addition to attendance, timekeeping can also be a challenge when working with refugees and asylum seekers, with participants frequently showing up late, in some cases as much as 30 minutes after the session was due to start. Although there are no specific reasons the pilwhy participants struggled with this, most project partners noted it as an issue particular to their Welcome through Football projects, impacting the delivery of the planned sessions. It is advisable coaches take a flexible approach to timekeeping, especially at the beginning of the programme. Try to be relaxed about latecomers and design activities which can flexible at short notice to different participant numbers. If proper timekeeping is an important part of your society (for example if being repeatedly late to work would be frowned upon and even a sackable offence) you could include timekeeping/management as a workshop; this may also help you understand the reasons for participants being late and what additional support you could provide, for example if they cannot afford to use public transport and are walking to get to training, is there a coach who drives who can give them a lift?

Over time you can reinforce the importance of good timekeeping, giving them a better understanding of its impact on and off the football pitch

INTEGRATION INTO GRASSROOTS CLUBS:

Integrating refugees from the Welcome through Football programme into local grassroots clubs was extremely difficult for the project partners, as many participants were missing the relevant paperwork to be able to register with the FA/league. In some areas the problem is recognised and governing bodies are removing barriers so displaced people can still take part, but it can still be a challenging process. Where they are not already doing so,

clubs can engage local Associations on the issue to seek solutions and/or find options where formal registration is not required that allow participants to continue to play football. A secondary issue is that some clubs ask for fees/subs from players to cover the costs of running activities and the wider organisation. In these cases, you could support with researching potential grants or sponsorship opportunities to allow the participant to join for free/at an affordable rate. Alternatively, the grassroots clubs may need to be educated on the financial challenges for people seeking asylum, which may encourage them to broaden their offer and give better access to their provision to those on low incomes. Alternatively, if resources allow, clubs running Welcome through Football projects may be able to create and/or run their own football teams, creating a pathway for participants into a more formal football development setting.

MANAGING AND COMPLETING SURVEYS:

As mentioned gathering data for evaluation is a critical element of the Welcome through Football programme, however, some partners stated that collecting reliable responses, especially in the early stages of the programme was challenging due to language barriers, informality of the sessions, or participants lack of willingness to share personal information and experiences. It was reported that as participants became more established in the programme and familiar with the staff, over time these problems became less frequent. Those looking to run Welcome through Football programmes need to be aware of and understand these challenges so they are prepared and can minimise these barriers to collect meaningful data from day one. Plan simple surveys at the beginning of the programme becoming more detailed over time, as well as communicating with new participants about the purpose of the data collection to give them more confidence to respond.

MANAGING PROJECT COSTS:

For some partners managing the costs of the Welcome through Football project was a key challenge. As the programme developed, some clubs recruited more participants and/or launched at more venues than originally anticipated, dramatically increasing the required budgets. The main expenditure for some partners was venue hire, with additional staff also cited as a significant unexpected additional cost. When considering running a Welcome through Football programme, or choosing to expand, ensure that you have a full consideration of the costs before committing. Make sure that you have a realistic budget which factors in items that will be specific to this group of participants, for example if you need to be based in a certain area to be accessible to refugees, you may have higher venue costs than if you can be flexible on location. If there is a need to expand the programme, but you do not have the budget to match, look again at possible community partners who can support you; they may be more engaged at the expansion phase than the original set up, as you can provide expertise and demonstrate the benefit of the project to their community from your initial programme.

MANAGING THE REFERRAL PROCESS:

Conversely to the challenge of finding participants, you may find that you are oversubscribed with the number of potential participants or that there is a wide variety of applicants making it difficult to place them into groups, for example if you have a wide range of ages. To overcome this, some partners set parameters of the participants who could register and attend the programme from the outset according to their local situation and desired outcomes (for example aiming to support women or if there was a high population of migrant children). It is still possible to make exceptions, you could allow siblings who are slightly younger/older to attend or enthusiastic individuals can be recruited and utilised in alternative roles, for example as assistant coaches or offered a place on a different project as appropriate.

RAMADAN AND OTHER RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS:

To facilitate an inclusive environment, it is important to keep in mind their religious holidays which may differ from the local traditions. Ask your participants about important dates and make plans accordingly, for instance pausing the programme during Ramadan or marking their holiday/ festival with participants, their families and/or the wider community.

EQUIPMENT FOR PARTICIPANTS TO STAY ACTIVE AT HOME:

In addition to the Welcome through Football football activities and workshop that you may run, for participants general health and well-being, it is recommended that they also exercise outside the programme. However, lack of access to sport equipment can be a barrier for them, so in addition to asking for football specific donations from your communities, you could ask for general sports equipment that can be shared with participants. You can also signpost to other projects or clubs they can join to be active outside of the programme.

WEATHER

Weather conditions may be a challenge in some regions, especially when available facilities are either poorly maintained or particularly susceptible to the impact of weather causing sessions to be cancelled. To overcome this issue, you may look for solutions that may not usually be considered in a football context, for example as the programme is designed to be recreational you could use an indoor hall that does not have football markings or that would be too small for development sessions; again, community partners may be a useful resource in this area. Another option is to work with the facility owner, partners, and other users to find investment into the facility, highlighting its importance to the community and the benefits of improving the standard for all.

COVID:

The Welcome through Football 2021 project started when COVID was still a concern for many and while a pandemic of the same scale is unlikely to happen again in the near future, there can be localised health issues that impact the delivery and participation of programmes which project managers may need to be aware of.



PARTNERSHIPS

As discussed throughout, building partnerships can be key to the success of your Welcome through Football project, including ensuring that it is financially sustainable, to source and support participants and for contributions of kit/equipment or venues.

Building reliable partnerships involves clarity of expectations from both sides, so from the outset make sure that this is embedded in your communications.

Possible partnerships for your project include:



MUNICIPAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS: they will be able to help advise you on funding, including grants and financial aid applicable to your project. These institutions can also link you to other local or regional organisations working towards the same goals. You can frame Welcome through Football within community projects, sports projects, or aid for refugees and asylum seeker when you apply for grants.



REFUGEE CENTRES: while they may not be able to offer funding from their own pocket, they may have links with organisations who would be able to support Welcome through Football, and you can also put in a joint application. They may also be able to offer staff/volunteers (especially those with experience working with refugees and who can speak their language) and kit/venues and will be a key partner for recruiting participants.



FOOTBALL ASSOCIATIONS (NATIONAL OR REGIONAL): working with your football association will be key in several ways: financial support, visibility for the programme (which can help attract sponsors, volunteers, or participants), donation of equipment or facilities, and supporting in other ways such as sponsoring coaching or referee licenses for your participants.



REFUGEE COMMISSIONS (NATIONAL HIGH COMMISSION OR EQUIVALENT): these organisations can help you advance the necessary arrangements to deliver your programme, again providing support specific to the needs of refugees and asylum seekers



LANGUAGE EXPERTS: looking to partner with a language school experienced in teaching the local language to foreigners you might be able to arrange free/discounted sessions. Accelerating participants learning of their new language will support integration into their new society, and, especially with mixed language groups will grow cohesion within the project.



SOCIAL ORGANISATIONS OR PROGRAMMES: it is likely that there will be other groups who work specifically with refugees and asylum seekers or who run projects with similar aims as the Welcome through Football programme (these might even be at your own club/foundation), for example supporting with employment opportunities. Instead of replicating work, you can integrate your participants directly into these programmes; there might be a small cost or you can offer a return deal, giving their participants access to your services/activities as appropriate.



OTHER LOCAL ORGANISATIONS: ranging from transportation to equipment or food provision, you may be able to partner up with organisations who can provide free or low rates to support your activities. Who you approach will be based on your specific need, but consider a range of organisations, small companies may wish to support local projects while multinationals often have funding pots that individual stores can distribute. They could also help you arrange non-football related activities such as workshops around employability, joining the labour market, mental health, physical health etc, or provide you with trained staff to work on the social and psychological needs of your participants. Because of the different dimensions of the project, you may be able to attract support from those who do not traditionally engage with sports.

The added value of creating these partnerships include:

- Shape your own Welcome through Football project with all parties involved; reflecting the needs of your participants and shared values and goals.
- Overall Necessary Ensuring participants receive the necessary support to improve their physical and mental health, with the possibility that you can offer more extensive provision by utilising expertise from several sources.
- Decide the values in which all parties want to focus when involving the participants.
- Psychological aid that they would have not been able to receive if it wasn't for these partnerships.
- Elevated provisions, for example more staff/ volunteers supporting the project, access to more/better equipment and facilities, enhanced learning opportunities, for example in language or employability lessons, or supporting participants with other needs, such as food provision where food poverty is present.
- Additional support for club staff, giving them tools to work with the participants more effectively, for example sharing advice and best practice for working with children or understanding participants cultural/religious backgrounds. Access to equipment and facilities
- Support learning the native language, which is key for the personal development of the participant outside of the football field, and useful for them when they join the football sessions.
- Synergies with participants and staff from the different partners involved.
- Provision of food at a low rate to help participants access food and battle food poverty.
- A better understanding about the labour market and employability tips like drafting a resume or applying for jobs and volunteering.
- Creation of a long term and varied support offer; helping to build relationships between participants and partner organisations that could go beyond Welcome through Football, for example volunteer/employment opportunities.
- Delivering a greater impact of the programme.



COMMUNICATION

Communication is fundamental to running your Welcome through Football project for various reasons. Disseminating your project on social media will be important to attract participants, staff and partners. Depending on your context, you may need to communicate in different ways, taking into account your audience and their access to your messages. Keep in mind that some of these recommendations may have to be checked to follow your organisation's requirements, for example around safeguarding.

Below you can find some suggested methods:

- Communication with your participants and staff
- Face-to-face, both in the participant group and also one-on-one to discuss needs or concerns. Keep in mind that when talking to them, eye contact is important but it may be intimidating, so you may want to have one on one talks while going for a walk, for example. Be clear and mindful of their language level and consider your use of slang/jargon etc.
- Via WhatsApp/messaging group: this method has shown to help with the identity of the group, the cohesion of the participants, and the translations of text into their native languages.

- Via partners such as refugee centres: not all participants will have access to phones/email, but it is likely they will have an integration or social worker or another key contact who you can work with to act as an intermediary.
- Via phone calls
- Via letters: this one has been used mainly with younger participants where direct messages via email or texts would not be appropriate or when messages are intended for parents/guardians.
- Parent/guardian meetings: also used with the younger participants.

Communication of the project to external parties
Content you may wish to share include (make sure you use high quality images and/or videos):

- Success stories.
- Marking World Refugee Day or similar.
- Special events such as tournaments, visits, or trips.
- Kick off of the project/season.
- How their contribution has helped the project.

Possible channels:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| • Social media | • Club TV Channel |
| • Club newsletters | • Website |
| • Project update emails | • Flyers |

Engaging with Partners

- When contacting an organisation about your Welcome through Football programme for the first time, tailor your message to their context, be clear what you want from them and what benefits you offer in return.
- After this initial introduction, explore other ways that you might be able to support each other.
- Put in writing what has been agreed, giving clarity of the expectations and responsibilities of both parties. If you/they cannot deliver for any reason allow for honest and open communication so that you can resolve issues or create a new agreement.
- Schedule review meetings; these can be as often as is required, but it is important partners know their value to you to for maintaining the relationship. Do not leave a review until the very end of a project cycle, as a partner may withdraw their support and having advanced notification will allow time to replace them in preparation for the next phase and minimise the impact of change.

WOMEN AND GIRLS

One of the biggest challenges you may find is engaging with women and girls. One reason for this is that communication about new football projects tends to project male participation, with imagery used in promotional material predominately showing men/boys. Additionally, when working with refugees and asylum seekers, it may not be appropriate for men and women -or boys and girls- to share sporting spaces due to cultural or religious reasons, preventing females joining projects even if intended to be open for all.

In this section you can find tips and recommendations how to engage women and girls in your project and how to accommodate them into your Welcome through Football project.

Tips:

- Collaborate with partners who have specific knowledge of working with female refugees.
- Include women/girls in your communication strategy and materials, show who the programme is aimed at – do not forget if potential participants do not yet understand the local language images become even more important in your messaging
- Engage female role models or influencers who can help you reach to more female refugees and asylum seekers.
- Include female staff to reduce cultural barriers and create a role model bond with the players.
- If you work with boys and girls, try to specifically engage with their mothers and encourage them to become part of the Welcome through Football community; they could be volunteers, future participants or simply use the programme to meet and make friends, building their own support networks.
- Providing females relevant support can help to earn their trust making it more likely they will join you.
- When women decide to play with men, make sure everyone is aware of the risks and differences in physicality.
- Provide a separate changing area, - do not ask them to use a storage closet etc. but provide a proper space that makes them feel safe and welcome at the venue.

SPECIFIC CHALLENGES TO CONSIDER:

- Playing or participating alongside men is not an option due to religion/culture. If that is the case with your female participants, consider providing a separate session they can join.
- Playing or training in an open venue where men can watch even if they are not actively participating - can also be unacceptable. In this case, finding indoor venues or pitches with fences, where access and visibility can be restricted, needs to be a priority.
- Some women may have childcare responsibilities which can prevent them from taking part, so clubs may consider adding this provision when establishing programmes (ensuring all safeguarding concerns are met and also being mindful of specific needs of refugee children).



INTEGRATION BEYOND WELCOME THROUGH FOOTBALL



The purpose of Welcome through Football is to enable participants to become more engaged in their new communities. As the project has a specific football focus, one route may be for them to join a local football team, either as a player or coach, while employability is also integral to the programme aims. It is likely that your participants will face barriers to their integration and as each individual will have unique challenges there is no single solution, but common themes noted by clubs involved in the pilot project were paperwork, lack of finance to participate, timekeeping and preparedness. In some scenarios you will not be able to resolve the problem, but there is still support that can be provided, some examples might include: When integrating your refugees and

asylum seekers into the labour market and grassroots clubs, there is not one single solution to the various challenges, and each individually will have to be considered separately, since it will all depend on the specifics of each person. Below you can see some challenges that you may face, and some of them will require time or new policies at the national level, which will be difficult to change in the short term. In any case, preparing your participants for the labour market by educating them on the general information they may need in the future, such as CV writing, interview tips, a better understanding of the labour market, preparing applications for jobs, or training them for coaching or referee licenses, will be possible regardless of their status:

PAPERWORK - FOR EMPLOYMENT AND GRASSROOTS CLUBS: in most cases, asylum seekers do not have the right to work or to join a football club, and receiving these permits can take years. It can take years for refugees and asylum seekers to be granted permission to stay in a new country and to be able to work. Many also arrive without identification documents, so even registering for a grassroots club can be challenging. While it may not be possible to speed up the process, you can look for partners who can offer advice and make sure that applications are done correctly. To assist with footballing matters you can consult your local FA on what can be done to break down these barriers to playing.

LICENSING COST - FOR GRASSROOTS CLUBS: joining a club entails costs in many football clubs, and even when the right paperwork to join is available, the cost of it is not within reach. Costs – as mentioned above there can be financial implications to joining a football club either as a player (subs, football boots etc) or even to volunteer if specific qualifications are required, for example completing a first aid course. Ways to reduce or support these costs could include providing information to the grassroots club on funding opportunities or asking partners if they will support the participant beyond the Welcome through Football project, such as continuing to pass on unused kit.

PUNCTUALITY AND TIMEKEEPING CHALLENGES: it is recognised some societies place great importance on good timekeeping skills,

which may conflict with the cultural norms of the participant, or they may simply face additional challenges in being able to be punctual (for example if they are reliant on incompatible public transport timetables). In some clubs, this constitutes a penalty which they would not be able to afford – for employment and grassroots clubs. This can lead to financial penalties, either through lost pay or being fired from employment or on the football pitch if teams are fined for late starts/insufficient numbers which may be passed on to the individual or they may be excluded from the club if they are deemed unreliable. If timekeeping is a particular concern ensure that it is part of your programme curriculum, including both informing participants why it is important they become more effective time managers and how to communicate to future employers/ groups any external challenges they may face to minimise the impacts of perceived poor punctuality.

PREPAREDNESS – as with the above example in respect to timekeeping, there might be other ways you can support participants to be more prepared when integrating into your society. While they may not be able to join the labour market immediately, it is still possible to educate them on the general information they will need such as CV writing/ preparing applications, interview tips, and a better understanding of the labour market. If desired roles require specific qualifications (e.g., a football coach and coaching badges) it might be possible to complete the course while waiting for permission to work, so that they are ready to step into employment once it is granted.

ADDITIONAL TIPS

Be open-minded and adaptable

Tolerate frustrations and try modifying things

Communicate openly

Provide opportunities for your participants to share their experiences with others, this may be inspiring

Involve social workers and or psychologists within your staff group

Foster greater cultural awareness, tolerance and understanding about refugees and asylum seekers

Keep the project running

Find effective partnerships

Involve your network

Focus on the person and their needs, not just on football sessions and performance



Welcome
through football

CASE STUDIES



FUNDAÇÃO BENFICA

NAME OF THE PARTICIPANT

Ali Jawani

CLUB

Fundação Benfica

ROLE

Player

AGE

18

GENDER

Male

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Afghanistan

THE STORY

Ali Jawani is an 18-year-old boy from Afghanistan, who has been in Portugal for two years. Ali Jawani arrived when he was sixteen years old. Upon his arrival, Ali was welcomed at the Portuguese Red Cross, where he was housed with other refugees from the same country.

In his home country Ali played football and wanted to continue his practice in Portugal, with the aim of becoming a professional player. However, after his arrival, he had to undergo knee surgery. After the surgery, there was a long period of recovery, in which Ali overcame a phase of anger and demotivation, caused by the sudden withdrawal from football. This less positive period of his sporting life caused Ali to have some behavioural problems, both at school and at the foster home, which were only solved when he was present at training, even during the knee recovery process.

Despite all these adversities, Ali continued to express his desire to become a professional football player and to be integrated into a grassroots team. Due to his ability to overcome challenges and resilience, Ali had the opportunity to join the training sessions of a club on the outskirts of Lisbon, where he was able to develop his skills as a player and where he was also able to be integrated into the team and participate in the regional championships.

Since then, Ali has successfully transitioned the team from the foundation to the grassroots football, participating positively in training sessions and championships, as he continues to pursue his goal of being a professional player.



FC EMMEN NAOBERSCHAP

NAME OF THE PARTICIPANT

Mohammed Kalaf

CLUB

FC Emmen

ROLE

Volunteer trainer

AGE

33

GENDER

Male

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Syria

THE STORY

Mohammed Kalaf is a 33 years old man who passed his civic integration course via the social department of FC Emmen. After different cooperations between FC Emmen and local partners, he ended up having a role helping out at the AZC Refugee centre by training the children.

FC Emmen Naoberschap has had a good partnership with USG Restart and UWV for over two years. In the context of reintegration, the doors at FC Emmen are open to people in need, because in Drenthe they help each other if and where necessary. USG Restart supports jobseekers in finding a job together with the UWV. They look at what someone distant from the labour market needs, what suits them and what they can do in terms of work. The 'On the road to work' programme is carried out by FC Emmen employees, footballers, trainers and volunteers, together with FC Emmen Naoberschap.

"In this programme we help the candidates along. We try to get them moving again. The basis has to be good before you can start working." Johan Vels of USG Restart

One of the candidates who went to FC Emmen within the framework of (re-)integration was Mohammed Khalaf. Mohammed was born in Syria and has lived in the Netherlands for five years. He was a tailor and he would like to do that work again. A major obstacle for him was that he was not yet sufficiently proficient in the Dutch language. He has received support in this area by Taalpunt. Another passion for Mohammed is football, and thanks to his passion, Mohammed ended up at FC Emmen via the work fit programme.

Mohammed received an FC Emmen clothing package and participates in various projects within the social foundation as a volunteer. For instance, he helps out at training sessions and trains young residents of the asylum seekers' centre in Emmen. In this way, he can improve his language skills and make social contacts.



**NEWCASTLE
UNITED
FOUNDATION**

NEWCASTLE UNITED FOUNDATION

NAME OF THE PARTICIPANT

Anar Abakar

CLUB

Newcastle United Foundation

ROLE

Player

AGE

24

GENDER

Male

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Sudan

THE STORY

Anas was recommended the Welcome through Football project and he approached the Newcastle United Foundation to find out more about the foundation refugee's programme. He loved the information they gave him, so he did not hesitate to show his interest before signing up and joining the programme.

Anas is a 24-year-old young man from Sudan who is currently seeking asylum in Newcastle, and the staff have successfully been able to build a positive relationship since he joined the programme. Anas is a very respectful person, so it has been easy to get on with, he is very reliable and attended most sessions since joining. Anas was leaving the refugee's accommodation when they first met in east end of Newcastle. He felt lonely and he was living with other people who also spoke different languages, so he found it very difficult at times.

So far, Anas has been involved in numerous sessions with the foundation, such as Play on the patch at (St James Park), Nu: Futures employability level course, Refugees' tournament in (NUCASTLE roof top pitch), Mental health general wellbeing / health check, 1-1 employability support to develop transferable skills.

Since joining the programme, Anas has improved dramatically, raising his confidence and communication skills. Anas started to help on the sessions by taking the kit duty responsibilities and equipment out on the field of play when needed. He also has been helping with registering others when attending the sessions. Due to Anas helping on sessions he has decided to take the opportunity to the next step and start volunteering with the foundation. Hopefully this will lead to Anas becoming a sessional member of staff and paid work. Anas is currently in the middle of his DBS process, and once completed he will start volunteering with Newcastle United Foundation.

Anas has dramatically improved his social circles. Anas communicates very well now, he even helps with translation when needed during activities, which has led him on making new friends from different countries and backgrounds.



HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN F.C

NAME OF THE PARTICIPANT

Amelia Shepel

CLUB

Heart of Midlothian F.C

ROLE

Player

AGE

16

GENDER

Female

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Ukraine

THE STORY

Amelia is Big Heart's first ever (of 2!) female participants within the Welcome Through Football. Amelia came to Big Hear through their Ukrainian open day searching for a place that she could access free, fun football and with a mind to getting into local teams. Amelia was selected for scholarship at a local private school for her ability in sport as well as academia and wanted to further her skills outside a school setting. She has a great level of English and as such was a great link to other Ukrainian members of the group through translating, organising, and chatting with them.

Amelia becoming their first female member was of course massive for them. The staff was worried that the physical level might be too tough, it may be an uncomfortable setting or that the other members of the group might reconsider the group if it wasn't to their liking. However, Amelia settled right in and had no fear, was competitive and eager to learn from her peers. The group were respectful and made Amelia feel very welcome and safe, and anyone can feel they can enter, regardless of ability, gender, or race.

Amelia used the contacts she has made through Big Hearts to get herself a trial at a local SWPFL (Scottish Women's Professional Football League) team – Boroughmuir Thistle F.C. Her showing no fear and a willingness to progress with Big Hearts and elsewhere has given her this opportunity.

As stated, she also finds herself being a leader for their Ukrainian members – she is lead translator and has all of the other participants looking to her for the connection to our messages.



EVERTON IN THE COMMUNITY

NAME OF THE PARTICIPANT

Isaac Peter

CLUB

Everton in the Community

ROLE

Player

AGE

24

GENDER

Male

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

South Sudan

THE STORY

Isaac Peter is 24 and originally from South Sudan, growing up in a small city called Malakai, where his family was involved in farming and agriculture. After experiencing persecution and threats of violence during the civil war in his home country, Isaac decided to flee leaving his friends and family. Isaac fled to North Sudan, then onto Libya, where he then had to cross the Mediterranean Sea to Italy and illegally entered France before ending up in the UK.

Isaac was then transferred in Liverpool whilst his application for status was considered. Despite not knowing anyone in Liverpool, Isaac was excited to live in Liverpool as he is a massive football fan and Liverpool supporter. Isaac first became aware of EitC's 'Welcome through Football' programme through the local charity 'Share Knowsley' who supported Isaac with his accommodation application.

Upon describing his experiences since joining the programme, Isaac said:

"Welcome through Football has helped me meet other refugees and make lots of new friends. Being involved in the team has helped me settle into a new place and made me feel at home".

"I feel so integrated and this programme has now become a massive part of my life. Being involved in the programme has helped me improve as a footballer and has had a really big impact on my mental health."

"My favourite part of being involved in the programme is being part of a team and representing Everton wearing the kit. My biggest highlight has been winning a trophy at the St. George's Park tournament, the home of the English national team."

"Since being involved with Everton in the Community, I have fallen in love with the club. Being able to go and see the first team play as a guest of honour at the hospitality suite and meet some of the players was an experience I will never forget; I am now a massive Everton fan"



KAA GENT FOUNDATION

NAME OF THE PARTICIPANT

The Azzam Family

CLUB

KAA Gent Foundation

ROLE

Players

AGE

16 From 6 to 12

GENDER

1 male, 2 female

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Lebanon

THE STORY

The KAA Gent Foundation has known the Azzam family for a couple of years. The family consists of four children: Sadeel, Anas, Aseel and Tala. Due to age, only Tala and Aseel are regulars, but Sadeel and Anas are sometimes involved in activities.

KAA Gent Foundation was able to connect with the Azzam family thanks to their partnerships with some local schools, which have a “bridge figure” being the connection between the schools, their teachers and the families of the students, so they know quite well the families. Thanks to this connection, they were also able to check with the school and realise that the kids had some difficulties at home, although neither the school nor the staff from the foundation managed to speak with the parents because the children walked home on their own.

One day, they walk into Azzam, the father of the kids. Even though he only speaks Arab, he was curious about the activities running with the KAA Gent Foundation, and he was wondering if they had any activities involving plants and gardening, since he had a beautiful garden in Lebanon. This was the beginning for Azzam to start gardening, mowing the grass, building a conservatory, and planting flowers and vegetables. He received support from Anas, the oldest child, while the younger ones joined the football sessions. Soon they noticed the bond between the family and the staff, and how positive influence these activities were having on the family. This bond allows the staff to reach out to Azzam when they see that the children may be going through difficult times.

In sum, Sadeel helps out when possible, because she is too old to join as a participant, but she is also doing great at school, so she keeps busy with that. Anas has shown massive improvements in his behaviour since the beginning of the project; he used to be hard to handle due to his attitude, but now he is helping his father with the garden, since he is also older for the programme. Aseel has always been the calmer child in the family, and now she tends to be more open to listen. Tala is always looking for attention, but she has also improved her behaviour, step by step, especially challenging when she has to listen to people she doesn't know. The project has helped her a lot. Finally, Azzam went from a dad never seen around the programme to a regular, learning Dutch and having a sense of belonging. Not only this, but the KAA Gent Foundation garden looks absolutely beautiful now!



WERDER BREMEN

NAME OF THE PARTICIPANT

Akash

CLUB

Werder Bremen

ROLE

Player

AGE

19

GENDER

Male

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Syria

THE STORY

During their programs, in addition to football education, Werder Bremen have always placed a strong focus on cultural education. This included, for example, visits to museums, but also relaxation exercises and the provision of other educational content that contributed to the personal development of the participants. In addition to skills learned “incidentally”, such as language, a spectrum of knowledge could also be actively built up that not only covers one’s own physical and mental well-being, but also arouses interest in cultural aspects. For those of the other participants from the programs, but also for European culture(s).

What was striking was Hassan’s increased interest not only in art and culture in the sense associated with art, but also in understanding customs in the world. What was particularly striking was the individual engagement with issues of participation and discrimination. It became increasingly noticeable that he not only developed an interest in improving performance in sport, but that the need for further training also became more and more central.

As a result, he will continue to develop more and more opportunities for participation in the future. By empowering him to continue his own training, he manages to emancipate himself from the offers and, for example, get his driver’s license without the support of the club.



Welcome
through football

TESTIMONIALS



FUNDAÇÃO BENFICA

NAME OF THE PARTICIPANT

Mojtaba Amini

ROLE

Player/ Coach

”

Fundação Benfica allowed me to be in family with people who have the same background as me, helping us to adapt and creating fantastic opportunities for us.



KAA GENT FOUNDATION

NAME OF THE PARTICIPANT

Aman Allah

ROLE

Player

”

When I think about the Buffalo League the word “Playing and learning to love each other” comes in my mind. The Buffalo League means being happy, being together. Even when the children are fighting sometimes, we learn to be friendly and kind to one another.



EVERTON IN THE COMMUNITY

NAME OF THE PARTICIPANT

Abul Aziz

ROLE

Player



I have made some amazing friends at Everton and we have become like brothers. They have helped me and I help them. We are a team and we win and lose together, always to the end and always with big hearts.



HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN F.C

NAME OF THE PARTICIPANT

Hassan Sayedhamed

ROLE

Player



The coaching staff and players gave me a lot of knowledge in the world of football and I learned a lot from them which made me confident in myself. Since I came to Edinburgh until now, all my close friends I got to know through this organization, and the interesting thing is that I also became good at communicating with others. Thank you very much Big Hearts.



FC EMMEN NAOBERSCHAP

NAME OF THE PARTICIPANT

Willy Lubowa

ROLE

Role model / trainer

”

I came to the Netherlands as a refugee. I lived at the AZC in Emmen for several years. To be part of the project now is very instructive and recognisable for me. I can pass on what I have experienced to the participants. In this way I hope to give good things to the participants.



WERDER BREMEN

NAME OF THE PARTICIPANT

Hussein

ROLE

Player

”

I think the training is good. I'm happy to play football with my friends. I first met many of them here. Before, I was almost exclusively at home. I think it's cool that something like this exists.



SHEFFIELD UNITED

NAME OF THE PARTICIPANT

Mukhtar Mohammed

ROLE

Coach



We keep ourselves busy here, we keep ourselves fit. So we really enjoy this place. We have these sessions twice a week, and I like football so every day I have to be here.



**NEWCASTLE
UNITED
FOUNDATION**

NEWCASTLE UNITED FOUNDATION

”

NAME OF THE PARTICIPANT

Ngennijepi Katuuu

ROLE

Player

I think this programme very important for the young people. Personally, I moved to the UK at age 12 from Somalia, and moving to a new country was very difficult. Football helped me massively to interact with kids, because football is one language and you don't need to speak, so it vaswas very good for me.



FURTHER STEPS / CONCLUSIONS



The Welcome through Football programme has a big potential to help refugees and asylum seekers in your community to be reintegrated into society and, depending on the age, help your participants find employability opportunities and be prepared for the labour market in the arriving country.

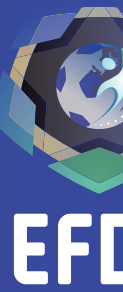
The challenges and outcomes of the projects are very similar across the different countries in which the project has been running. This guide contains some solutions to these problems and provides with tips, but the possibilities are countless and each organisation will navigate through the process within their own context.

Understanding the challenges that your participants may face outside of the football sessions will be fundamental to keep them joining your sessions and benefiting from playing football.

For more information, visit the Welcome through Football website: www.welcomethroughfootball.eu



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Development Network

DFN



More than football

Making football matter

**Questions?
In need of further information?**

Please contact us by phone or email:



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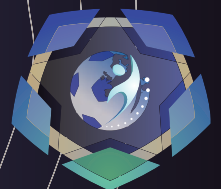


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Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

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