

## UEFA Foundation for Children and FedEx return to Cañada Real

### Celebration of the success of this community football pitch

It has been a year since the UEFA Foundation for Children and FedEx, the main sponsor of the UEFA Europa League, built the first 'Field in a Box' in the Cañada Real district of Madrid, one of Spain's most economically disadvantaged areas. To celebrate the resounding success of this community football pitch, which was donated to Red Deporte y Cooperación, a Madrid-based non-profit organisation, we recently met up with FedEx in the Spanish capital.

The 'Field in a Box', is an enclosed, artificial football pitch with metal railings and high-sided goals that was shipped by FedEx in two containers and inaugurated in May 2016. It sits in an area of self-constructed housing, home to immigrants from both Morocco and the Roma community.

Local charity Red Deporte y Cooperación maintains the pitch and ensures its sustainable and coordinated use by employing a youth coach from the local community. Red Deporte's sports programme in Cañada Real is supported by streetfootballworld and the UEFA Foundation for Children, with the overall aim of using football to drive social change and cohesion within the local communities.

Today, 400 children and young adults are involved in the project. 90% are boys and 10% girls aged 5 to 30 have benefitted directly from the pitch, and nearly 500 football matches have been organised there since the project began.

"The success of the pitch in Cañada Real is an excellent example of the impact football can have on a local community, and shows just how important it is to develop sustainable projects that continue to have an impact after their completion," said Cyril Pellevat, head of administration at the UEFA Foundation for Children. "Together with FedEx, we have already begun work on a second pitch in Mragowo – a segregated community in north-east Poland – and we look forward to making a real difference there this summer."

For Carlos de Carcer, responsible at Red Deporte the football field has transformed the landscape of Cañada and created a space of reference where kids can play, have fun, get a better education and meet their friends daily in a safe place. "Before, there was only a piece of bumpy land where kids just played randomly one-two hours per week. Now with regular activities organised by Red Deporte and this new infrastructure, the pitch has awoken a sense about the importance and potential of football at Cañada, creating a sense of community around football, aspiring to better perspective in Cañada."

You can follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).