

# 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



## SPORT FOSTERS PSYCHOSOCIAL WELL-BEING



### Study confirms impact of «Sport for Development» in Northern Iraq

#### Background

When people are (in)directly exposed to life-threatening events such as **war and displacement** or experience severe helplessness, injustice, and loss (of relatives, friends, and belongings), this can have an immense **impact on their well-being** and their relationships. Often, these experiences are perceived as extreme disempowerment and loss of control.

Sport can potentially be used in a way to **improve a child's psychosocial well-being**. Practices are designed, accompanied, and managed in a **trauma-informed manner** and supervised by a **coach who has been trained** and is experienced in providing psychosocial support. If sport is supervised properly, they can empower children and (re)build coping strategies. It can give them a chance to experience the following: empathy, fairness, cooperation, self-control and self-efficacy, a **sense of belonging** to a group, reflection on their emotions and behaviour, **copied with both success and frustration** and more.

#### The Project

On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH supports introducing **gender sensitive** sports activities into camps for **internally displaced persons (IDP)** and **Syrian refugees** as well as **host communities** in **Northern Iraq** and **Jordan** to foster **psychosocial well-being** and a **peaceful coexistence**. The project has started its work in Jordan in 2016 and in Iraq in 2018, training local coaches to identify and exploit the potential of sport for children's development. Until now, over **30.000 children and youth** have been reached through 370 trained sport coaches in Iraq. To prove that GIZ's S4D approach is a meaningful tool to promote **gender equality** and to **prevent violence against women and girls (VAWG)**, to strengthen **psychosocial well-being** and to foster **social cohesion**, the project has joint forces with the **GIZ Global Project S4D**, the **German Sport University Cologne**, the **University of Dohuk** and the NGO **Friends of Waldorf Education**.

#### Intervention Design

Children and Youth between 10 and 19 years old (28% female) in 25 sport teams participated in regular gender sensitive **Football** and **Ultimate Frisbee** sessions (2x/week), **“Fair-Play”- Leagues** and **Game Festivals**. The activities were conducted in three **IDP camps** (Chamishko, Bersive I, Bersive II) in Zakho District, Duhok Governorate and the **host community** of Zakho City. 20 sport coaches (two per team) implemented the activities for a period of eight to nine months. All coaches received previous and continuous technical, methodological, and pedagogical training and supervision to be able to implement sport in a way that fosters psychosocial support, gender equality and prevention of VAWG as well as social cohesion.

#### Data collection and study design

- Quasi-experimental study design; mixed-method approach with quantitative and qualitative elements
- Standardized digital questionnaire (> 60 items) via tablets and focus group discussions
- 636 children and youth interviewed (317 intervention group, thereof 28% females; 319 comparison group, thereof 35% females)
- Baseline: November 2021
- Endline: May/ June 2022

#### Characteristics of the intervention group

- Football:** 253 children and youth
- Ultimate Frisbee:** 64 children and youth
- IDP camps:** 253 children and youth
- Host communities:** 64 children and youth
- Mixed sports teams:** 220 children and youth
- Same-sex teams** (mainly boys): 97 children and youth

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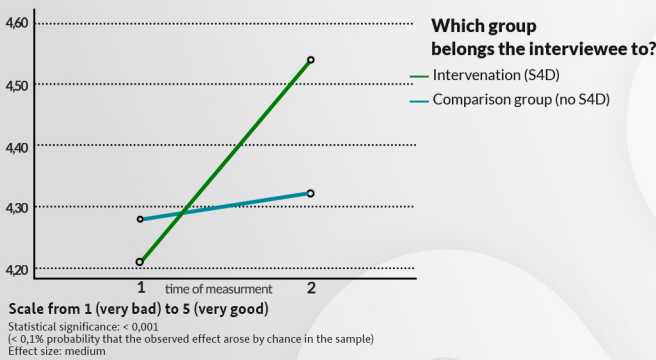
## SDG 3.4

By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being

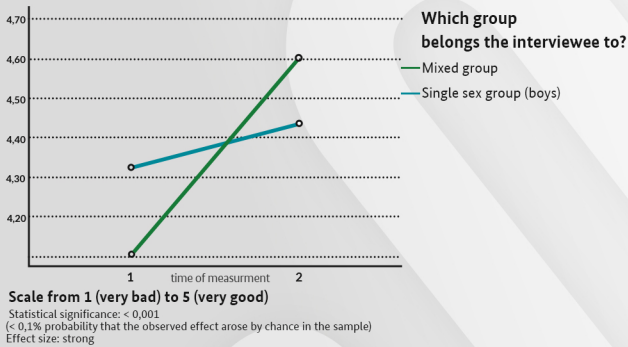


THE STUDY RESULTS ARE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT AND CAN BE GENERALIZED TO CHILDREN AND YOUTH BETWEEN THE AGES OF 10 AND 19 IN NORTHERN IRAQ FROM THE S4D INTERVENTION CONTEXT.

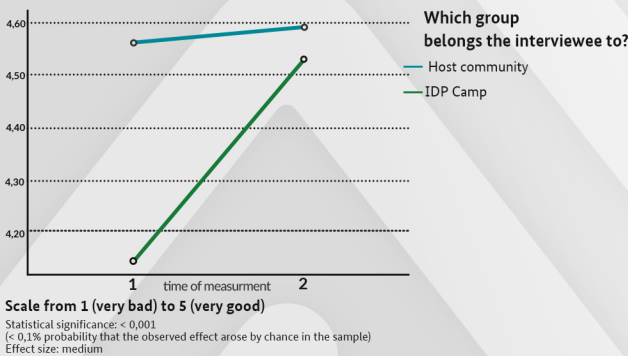
### PSYCHOSOCIAL WELL-BEING



S4D measures in Northern Iraq improve psychosocial well-being.

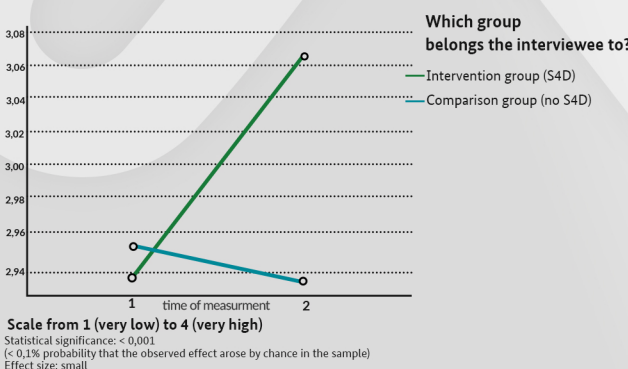


Mixed sport teams increase psychosocial well-being in boys compared to same-sex teams.



S4D measures have a different impact on psychosocial well-being among children and youth from host communities and refugee camps.

### SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL COMPETENCES



S4D measures in Northern Iraq increase social-emotional competences to a small degree.

The statements made derive from over 60 items, thereof 35 specifically on knowledge, attitudes, and behavior in the context of SDG 3.4