



Sport for Development

Refugees, displaced persons and local people in Jordan and Iraq are using sports activities to promote a healthy lifestyle and peaceful coexistence in the community.

Jordan



Project title	Exchange, education and conflict transformation through Sport for Development
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Implementing organisation	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Project area	Jordan: Mafraq, Amman, Zarqa and Irbid Iraq: Dohuk, Saxo and Sumel
Lead executing agency	Jordan: Ministry of Education Northern Iraq: Ministry of Planning of the Kurdish Regional Government
National partners	Asian Football Development Project (AFDP), Jordanian Football Association (JFA), University of Jordan
Overall term	July 2016 to June 2019
Volume	4 million euros

Uneasy coexistence

The war in Syria and the rise of the terrorist militia Islamic State have driven millions of people from their homes since 2011. By mid-2016, more than 655,000 Syrians were officially registered in Jordan alone – although estimates place the figure twice as high. Around 250,000 refugees fled to Iraq in 2016. In addition, 46,000 Iraqi nationals returned to Iraq from Syria. Over three million people are on the move in Iraq as internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Both in Jordan and in Iraq, those seeking refuge live mostly outside the refugee camps in host communities. In some cities, such as Dohuk in northern Iraq, the population has

doubled since 2011. Despite this, access to basic services and health care must be ensured for all population groups. In addition, they should be provided with psychosocial support, education and leisure activities. Traumatized children and young people, in particular, require professional guidance and support. Providing such services comes with enormous challenges: local governments and schools are overburdened, and teaching staff are already working in a double-shift system with 60 children per class – Jordanian children attending school in the morning shift and Syrian children attending the afternoon shift. There is hardly any access to sport. However, team sport in particular can play a role in facilitating rapprochement between refugees, IDPs and local people. This is urgently necessary amid the growing social conflict: After five years of war, the tolerance and hospitality of host communities is waning while propensity to violence is on the increase.

Facing the future with a sound mind and body

From football and basketball to climbing, taekwondo and dancing – sport not only strengthens the body, it also promotes interpersonal communication and cooperation. German development cooperation activities are harnessing this aspect to promote stability and social cohesion.





On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH helps local organisations to introduce sports activities into Iraqi and Jordanian refugee camps and host communities. Refugees, internally displaced persons and local people aged between 8 and 24 can play sport with one another in a safe environment. This gives

them an opportunity to experience and gain many of the values that over time have become neglected as a result of war and displacement: respect for others, fairness, self-confidence and belonging to a community.

The focus of the project is on the physical and mental growth and rehabilitation of children and young people. Local experts are trained to identify and exploit the potential of sport for children's development. Social workers, teaching staff and trainers learn how to communicate social skills and values through sport. By adapting sports activities that are based on scientifically acknowledged pedagogical methods, the project can also integrate disadvantaged and disabled young people – those who are commonly regarded as having little chance of success in life. It also encourages girls and young women to get involved. In a region in which they traditionally have little access to sports activities, involvement can open a way to greater self-determination. Group sport builds many bridges: It provides opportunities for children and young people from all sections of the population to meet, to get to know each other, establish friendships and build hope. In doing so, sport helps to prevent conflict and violence.

A generation involved in sport

A large number of refugees live in host communities in the Jordanian provinces of Amman, Irbid, Mafraq and Zarqa. With GIZ support, these people are being provided with gender-

sensitive sports activities at over 60 schools and 40 community centres. In this way, the Sport for Development project has reached over 10,000 children and young people. In the northern Iraqi districts of Dohuk City, Saxo and Sumel sports activities are benefiting around 65,000 children and young people in six refugee camps and two youth centres.

The project is training 240 teachers and coaches in sports activities and coaching methods in order to ensure the Sport for Development approach is used sustainably to promote psychosocial support, violence prevention and conflict transformation. Half of the participants are female.



Fostering personalities

Maryana Haddad, aged 21, plays for the Jordanian national women's football team. Haddad completed an advanced course to become a trainer as part of the Sport for Development programme and now offers coaching. *"I quickly recognised the enormous potential of the programme concept. What makes this programme unique in Jordan is the combination of professionally organised football training and targeted support for personality development with young people. I really enjoy working with the children and fostering their development, regardless of their nationality, age or gender. And in my role as a coach, I also grow and try to be a role model for the kids – both on and off the pitch."*

The project is part of the BMZ special initiative 'Tackling the Root Causes of Displacement, Reintegrating Refugees', which provides short-term support to refugees and their host communities. In the long term, sustainable measures are designed to combat the structural causes of displacement, such as poverty and a lack of prospects. This project contributes to personal and professional development, promotes conflict prevention and strengthens social cohesion within refugee camps as well as between refugees and host communities.

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