

THE CIVIL SOCIETY FUND

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION INTERVENTION

ENGAGING YOUTH IN CHILD SAFEGUARDING IN SPORTS

1. Objective and relevance

Objectives

The **overall objective** is promoting child protection in Tunisia, Jordan and Morocco through the mobilisation of youth and organisations to take joint action and responsibility on child safeguarding in sports.

The specific objective is to:

Enhancing competence in child protection and safeguarding in sports among voluntary youth sport coaches in cooperation with local child protection authorities

The immediate objectives are to

- **Strengthen knowledge, attitudes and behaviour among Cross Cultures voluntary youth coaches conducive to child safeguarding in sports**
- **Establish cooperation and referral systems with local protection units to protect children's rights**

The project will support partners and young volunteer sport coaches to obtain knowledge about children's rights, help them take responsibilities and acting on the challenges presented regarding child safeguarding in sports.

The main activities will be:

- a) establishing cooperation with protection units.
- b) development of child safeguarding workbook
- c) training of coaches
- d) peer-to peer exchange and study visit in Denmark
- e) peer- to- peer exchange in the region

Target groups and beneficiaries:

	Number of persons
Primary target group directly affected by the intervention	
– Youth coaches in MENA	240
– Youth in Denmark	40
Secondary target group indirectly affected or involved in the intervention – the national protection units personnel	110
Primary beneficiaries – the children engaging in Cross Cultures sports in MENA	30.000

With the project 240 voluntary youth leaders and lead coaches will be trained (Training of Trainers) in how to enhance a child friendly environment while at the same time safeguarding children's and in particular girls' rights and prevent abuse, maltreatment and discrimination. The project will thus strengthen the voluntary youth in their voluntary engagement and provide guidance in a sensitive area.

Moreover, the coaches and our partners will develop national child safeguarding commitments as a kind of code of conduct on child protection in sports.

With the project innovative cooperation and referral systems with local protection units and local child rights organisations will be established, that will improve the early warning and early support to children exposed to violence, neglect or abuse.

The youth will engage with Danish voluntary youth in Sports Associations in Denmark to learn about how they tackle their “duty of care” and the various dilemmas and concerns that may arise in sports. Moreover, the voluntary youth coaches will engage with Danish Youth at the Danish Youth Festival to be inspired of innovative ways of doing advocacy

With the project the taboo on violations of children will be addressed and space opened to talk about violations of children’s rights and the awareness of rights and personal integrity will be raised both among the youth themselves, among the children participation in sports and among families and communities.

Finally, the project will introduce the approach of child safeguarding in sports in Tunisia, Jordan and Morocco, which until now has not been addressed. It is likely that our partners may want to adapt the child safeguarding approach to their own sports member associations.

The intervention builds on and responds to the priorities and needs identified in our current youth & sports programme in Tunisia, Jordan and Morocco and thus the implementation structure, management structure and monitoring practice is in place. Moreover, the key target group – the youth volunteers – are already mobilised.

In short, the change strategy is that when youth coaches are mobilised for child safeguarding and when they have operational tools and referral mechanisms and support at hand they will be showing a safeguarding behaviour towards children in sports, which in turn will enhance the protection of children against violence and abuse and especially the girl child.

The project is designed with a duration of one year at the cost of DKK 497.619

Background

Since 2018 Cross Cultures have engaged with partners on training young people as youth leaders in Tunisia, Morocco and Jordan to implement grassroots sport for children through a specific child-centred and community-based Open Fun Sport approach. The Fun sports activities is a tool to civil engagement and a culture of peace and non-violence, gender equality, incorporation of cultural and social diversity and human rights (SDG 4.7)

Cross Cultures promotes social cohesion across social divides with focus on Sports and Dialogue and Cross Cultures is supporting children and young people in engaging in their communities through sport for development activities, youth leadership education and regional youth leaders networks. The mobilisation and implementation rate in all three countries have been ahead of target and the 70 youth in the regional youth platform are excited by the momentum created and how Sports and Dialogue can be a trampoline for social change in many ways.

The regional programme is supported by DAPP and has since end of 2017 reached 112,000 children and youth with 58% being girls thanks to the dedication and strong organization among 1,653 volunteers of which 48 % women. The programme is progressing successfully and in some areas even beyond expectations.

The need to address child safeguarding in sports and make stronger commitments on the “duty of care” has been identified in the consultations with the voluntary youth and local partners and the proposed intervention will be a targeted and focussed intervention adding to, building on and making synergies with the existing youth and sports programme in Jordan, Tunisia and Morocco.

Context

In the partner countries the question of child protection in sports have not yet been put on the agenda by national authorities, by local sports associations or by children’s rights NGOs. Thus, there are no particular requirements as we see it for instance in Denmark on staff or volunteers engaging with children in sports associations and football clubs. Therefor a particular focus on prevention of child abuse as well as protection and promotion is needed in the sports sector.

In general all three countries have in recent years made improvements in the national children’s rights protection and promotion systems and the situation of children have in several areas been improved. However, there exist a very significant “blind window” with high shadow numbers of children exposed to violence, neglect or abuse that are not identified, reported on or acted on due to a number of factors including cultural norms, distrust in the public social authorities and low capacities of the immediate duty bearers be it family or community institutions to respect and protect children.

The overall situation of families - and thus children and youth - in Jordan, Tunisia and Morocco are characterized by hardship on very many dimensions. The unemployment rate is high, the inflation is high reducing the purchasing power of households, there tend to be a traditional division of work among sexes in the household and gender equality in society remains a challenge. While there are concerns about the stability in the region, Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan are not considered to be fragile.

Regarding the context in Denmark, Cross Cultures is closely engaging with the Danish Sports Associations all located in our offices and especially with National Olympic Committee and Sports Confederation of Denmark (hereafter DIF - Dansk Idrætsforbund) on their child safeguarding promotional and preventive measures. The fact that the safeguarding measures are to be performed by volunteers requires a tailor-made approach based on knowledge, engagement and commitment rather than instructions and rules – this is the stronghold of DIF. The lead youth coaches will during the visit in Denmark be inspired by the DIF experiences in building safeguarding mechanisms in a voluntary environment with focus on club guidelines developed and signed by each sports club. Moreover, Cross Cultures has a cooperation with FC Nordsjælland, that has taken social responsibility on board through the Common Goals and youth coaches from FC Nordsjælland will share their experiences. Finally, Cross Cultures will partake with the youth coaches at the Danish Youth Festival and hold a number of interactive youth sessions that will expose youth from Denmark and MENA region to innovative advocacy and dialogue techniques.

Relevance

The project is supporting the SDGs in the area of 4.7, 5, 16 and 17.

The need and justification for enhanced competence development of voluntary youth and organisational strengthening in the field of child protection in sports flows from the **priorities identified by the voluntary youth sports coaches and by our organisational partners** in the existing youth & sports project. A combination of national scandals on sexual abuse of children, dilemmas faced by the youth volunteers and inspiration from Cross Cultures has now paved the way for enhancing capacity to deal proactively on child safeguarding in sports.

The local authorities for example in Tunisia on child protection are strongly supporting the initiative and they are delighted that youth coaches will be trained in child safeguarding in sports and thereby can be the eyes and ears for the promotion of children's rights and enhancing protection which is always a challenge. They have offered to partake in the trainings and support the youth coach teams in each Governorate/Province. The context in Morocco may be less conducive at first, and therefore it is important that Tunisia can be the example that shows a possible way ahead.

The training on child safeguarding will not only enhance the youth competences vis-à-vis the children in sports but also enhance their knowledge about their own rights and how to protect their integrity personally, professionally and sexually and as a citizen.

The proposed project works with the **development triangle** by addressing both organisational capacity of partners, providing strategic services in the form of training and child safeguarding advise, facilitating youth peer-exchange, and by exposure to new forms of public diplomacy and advocacy at the Danish Youth Festival.

The interaction with youth coaches in the FC Nordsjælland, with DIF and at the Danish Youth Festival will all bolster popular involvement and volunteering and provide a global window to the Danish youth at the Danish Youth Festival.

Cross Cultures is committed to "with youth, for youth, by youth" as also highlighted in the **Danish MFAs policy on Youth**. Through the voluntary experience the youth gain hands-on experience of democratic self-governance and principles of transparency, involvement, etc.

The proposed project also falls in line with the Danish MFA priorities in **Youth Leading the World 2030 and the emphasis on youth-youth exchanges and supporting youth lead agency**. Also EU priorities on youth in the New Consensus on Development especially the focus on facilitating young peoples' engagement in social and civic life will be addressed¹. Since 1998 Cross Cultures have been a strong actor in the Sport Plus development and this experience is put at use in the proposed project.

With this project Cross Cultures and partners will support the governments in fulfilling their national obligation to provide public education on children's rights and help ensure that various stakeholders uphold their duty of care.

Gender perspective and rights-based approaches

In Cross Cultures football and sports activities there is already a large focus on gender equality and a child-centred approach and in developing a child friendly environment. Moreover, there is attention to safety and security both on the pitch, in the games and during transport etc. However, there is a need to invest more in child protection and in clarifying the responsibilities resting on the various actors around the child including the voluntary youth coaches. The unique opportunity that Cross Cultures have when working with the kids on an ongoing basis in a safe space need to be used even further. Thus, there is need that the coaches have better understanding and tools at hand to ensure proper conduct, exercise our duty of care and take appropriate action in case children coming to sports show signs of maltreatment at home, school or at the streets.

¹ Engaging youth voluntary through Sports is highly relevant to and inspired by the UN recent Youth Development Policy, Youth 2030 and the intentions set out in the in resolution 70/1, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", adopted in 2015 where the role of sport in advancing social progress is further acknowledged. "We recognize the growing contribution of sport to the realization of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives".

This initiative will seek to safeguard both boys and girls. It will enhance gender equality in that coaches, children and families will be more aware of the rights of children risk behaviour. It will in particular benefit girls who in Tunisia, Morocco and Jordan are most at risk and will in that regard also contribute to more gender equity. It will help break down stereotypes and taboos regarding sexual intimidation and provide a safe space for speaking about personal integrity and risk behaviour.

This new initiative aims at building the competences of youth coaches through specific training to a) prevent, b) identify, c) refer cases of violence and abuse towards children and youth. It seeks to strengthen the awareness of rights holders (youth and children) about their rights, including a special focus on girls' and young women's rights as well as the awareness of duty bearers and cooperation with referral authorities and national protection units on these cases. The competence development of the youth coaches in this field will greatly enhance their own capacity to protect their own rights.

The child safeguarding approach pursued by Cross Cultures is inspired by DIF's extensive work in this field and by international practice in the area of enhancing ethical behaviour in sports. Consultations have been held with the Danish expert in the domain, Jan Darfelt, who as Cross Cultures argues for a bottom-up approach. The uniqueness of Cross Cultures is the cross-sectoral cooperation for child protection and the linkages between sports associations, children's rights NGOs, National Child Protection Units and municipal authorities.

2. Partnership/partners

The partnership consortium

Cross Cultures

The lead applicant in this project is Cross Cultures, which is a politically independent, non-profit organization located in Denmark. Cross Cultures is a so-called *plus sport* organization. Cross Cultures promote reconciliation and social cohesion across conflicts, culture, class and gender through the use of fun sport, dialogue and rights. Cross Cultures has over 20 years of experience in leading sport for social change programmes and has strong expertise in child protection and voluntarism. Cross Cultures is responsible for the overall management and administration of the project as well as co-delivering on the competence development and organisational strengthening. Cross Cultures has strong experience in international project management and partnerships and is currently managing large grants from the EU in Ukraine, from Sida in Moldova, from Danish Arab Partnership Programme in Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia and from UEFA in the Balkans. Cross Cultures is governed by a Board chaired by Ulrik Federspiel.

Current partnership

Cross Cultures has existing partners in Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia that will be co-implementing this project.

Tunisia:

Federation Nationale de Sports pour Tous is a non-governmental organisation with 156 members of local sports associations. The organization is governed by the members of the Federation through General Assembly and Executive Committee and the Federation has agreement with the Ministry of Youth and Sports with regard to support to sports activities in line with local laws and budgets for this. The current Youth & Sports project collaboration focuses on 5 geographical regions, and in 2018 the Tunisian Minister for Youth and Sport have supported the work of Cross Cultures in additional 7 locations in addition to the 5 locations under the DAPP programme. Currently there are five staff and in the Cross Cultures project 457 youth volunteers are involved.

Morocco:

Our partner in Morocco Association Femmes Realisation et Valeurs was formed by Nezha Bidouane, who decided at the end of her great career as an athlete to create an association whose goal is to use sport and physical activity as a means of human and social development. Its aim is to enable young boys and girls to gain the values of sport and physical activity as a means of education and acquisition of the fundamentals of citizenship in perfect equality.

The organization has in total 8 paid staff and 17 part time/ad hoc employees and 1103 volunteers of which 594 men and 527 women. The organization forms part of Federation Royale Marocaine De Sport Pour Tous under the Ministry of Youth and Sport

Jordan:

Cross Cultures has been in Jordan since 2005 and in 2018 the national registration of Cross Cultures in Jordan has been concluded, thus establishing the organisation as an NGO in Jordan with due statutes and independent board. Cross Cultures in Jordan organises Fun Football Schools in particular in urban settings affected by large influx and with high conflict sensitivity. Cross Cultures Jordan currently runs with 4 local staff and 275 voluntary youth coaches and assistants.

In the proposed project on child protection the existing division of responsibilities will be continued as it works well. Cross Cultures brings the expertise and approaches and the contact to Danish youth volunteers and sports associations, while the local partners have the direct relationships with the local target group (the young coaches) – the beneficiaries (the children) and the related agencies (national protection units and child rights NGOs)

All three local partners enjoy a very strong cooperation with local authorities and other associations and MOUs have been established with local authorities and synergies are being built with other civil society organisations. At the interregional level 70 youth leaders have been trained to undertake local community sports activities and supported in formulating their visions for society.

The organisation and implementation of the project will take place in the following manner:

- Cross Cultures will be responsible for financial management, monitoring and oversight
- The partner in Tunisia will be the lead partner.
- Cross Cultures and the partner in Tunisia will be responsible for the development of the workbook on child safeguarding in Sports and the adaptation following the first TOT (Training of Trainers)
- A Task force comprising Cross Cultures and partners lead coaches will be responsible for the planning and holding of peer-exchange study visit to DK
- Partners Lead Coaches will be responsible for holding of national TOTs
- Partner's Coordinator will be responsible for establishing cooperation with national protection units and NGOs.
- Regional exchange and lessons learned meeting will be held in Jordan simultaneously with annual Cross Cultures planning meeting and organised jointly by Cross Cultures Jordan and Cross Cultures Denmark.

Strengthening partnerships

The project will strengthen the capacity of partners to engage proactively on child protection in their respective settings and will allow for further strengthening of the regional youth leaders network. Moreover, it will allow an important exchange with Danish youth and CSO during the Danish Youth Festival where focus will be on Morocco and on voluntarism and advocacy in all its aspects. Finally, innovative new cooperation agreements will be established with national authorities in child protection.

In this way, the project will also pilot a new approach in Cross Cultures on Child Safeguarding in Sports and it thus provides mutual gains in the partnership.

Finally, due to the good recognition of the partners locally there are good prospects of up-take of the approach within Ministry of Sports and Youth and within the Federations of Sports itself among the many member sports associations.

The local ownership for this initiative is very high – for instance in Tunisia which is going to be the front-runner on this initiative, the local partner is making available volunteers, staff, logistics, communication facilities. The cost-effectiveness of the intervention is thus very high as all expenses are direct expenses on the activities.

3. The actual intervention - Child Safeguarding in Sport

The specific objective is to:

- 1) Enhancing competence in child protection and safeguarding in sports among youth sport coaches in cooperation with local child protection authorities

Immediate Objectives

- Strengthen knowledge, attitudes and behavior among Cross Cultures coaches conducive to child safeguarding in sports
- Establish cooperation and referral systems with local protection units to protect children's rights

Activity Stream

1. Establish cooperation with child rights NGOs and protection units
2. Developing safeguarding work book (Activity Budget Line 1)
3. National Workshops for Youth Coaches on Child Safeguarding (Act. Budget line 2)
4. Study and Exposure Trip to Denmark on child safeguarding visiting DIF etc. (Budget Line 3)
5. One Regional exchange and lessons learned seminar among the lead youth coaches (Budget Line 4)

Organisation and Sequencing of activities

The implementation of activities will follow a sequenced approach whereby Tunisia will be the pilot to develop the workbook on Safeguarding children in sport and the first training seminars for youth voluntary coaches in close cooperation with national child protection authorities, child rights NGOs and Cross Cultures. Thereafter, the Study and Exposure trip to Denmark on child safeguarding will be undertaken with in-country preparation. The next step will be for Jordan & Morocco to adopt and tailor the approach to their terrain and finally a regional lessons learned seminar will take place.

Regarding the workbook development, the local authorities and organisations relating to child protection are very supportive and they will also assist Cross Cultures in developing the workbook to be used in the Training of Trainers. For the national workshops the lead voluntary coaches (50% female) that have already been trained by Cross Cultures will be selected for training of training in child safeguarding. The majority are unemployed with higher education within sports and with didactic skills and high absorption capacity. They will cascade the training within the existing voluntary coach groups by enlarging the existing training with an additional day on child

safeguarding. For the peer-exchange and study visit to Denmark there will be selected two head coaches of both sexes from each country, who will work with the larger group in preparing the visit and who will act as child safeguarding focal points upon return with responsibilities of disseminating to the wider group. This same group will prepare the regional seminar in August 2020 focussed at harvesting the lessons learned and results obtained as well as mitigating any unforeseen challenges and cross-fertilisation in terms of approaches used. The regional seminar will also produce the brief that will be shared with UEFA and The Council of Europe on best practice in Child Safeguarding in youth led sports.

Approach and methodology

The Competence development approach of Cross Cultures builds on Cross Cultures 20 years of training experience focussing on the trinity of knowledge, attitudes and behaviour. The training is built around participative exercises whereby the fundamentals of children's rights will be unfolded, including the principles of best interest of the child, participation and non-discrimination and the obligations of respect, protection and promotion/provision. The training will be action- learning taking departure in the sports activities and fun football schools that the youth are already managing.

The Capacity Development approach of Cross Cultures builds on a systemic approach dealing with both leadership, people and structures. Thus, it is important that the initiative is endorsed by the leadership and given priority of the leadership to succeed. In turn, the competence development needs to be prioritised and given recognition and the new behaviours given appreciation and also organisational support. The agreements of referral and cooperation with protection units must be in place as well as the internal procedure in case of concern.

Risk related to the intervention is mainly linked to possible resistance among various stakeholders to addressing child safeguarding and here Cross Cultures and partners will mitigate such risks by the strong engagement of the youth itself and partner organisation in developing the country specific "Commitments". Moreover, Cross Cultures and partners have long experience facilitating change through mobilisation and dialogue – i.e. the strong involvement of women in a sport that is traditionally male dominated shows the ability to nourish changes while building the acceptance among families and communities. The national protection units will be dealing with other types of risks related to the children at risk.

Output and Outcomes

Output:

- 240 Voluntary Youth Coaches trained in child protection with abilities to identify protection risks and take appropriate action
- 240 Voluntary Youth Coaches having signed Child Safeguarding Commitments
- Youth exchanges have cross-fertilised youth perspectives on child safeguarding and public diplomacy.
- Cooperation established with child rights NGOs and National Protection Units
- Workbook on Safeguarding Children in Sports developed for replication

Outcomes

- Youth mobilised to take joint action on challenges related to child safeguarding
- Taboo broken and space opened to talk about violations of children's rights both in partner countries and in Denmark

- Children's rights and in particular girl's rights improved by protection their rights in sports and larger capacity to act on signs of maltreatment in school, home or on the streets
- Youth Coaches knowledgeable on rights and duties
- Enhanced gender equality
- More effective child protection system in place at each Governate
- Child protection awareness raised in sports, among children, families and communities

Second Phase outcomes

It is likely that there could be an uptake of the safeguarding initiative among the 156 member sports association of the Sports for All Federation in Tunisia once this initiative have been implemented. It is also likely that the Sports Associations in Jordan and the Ministry of Youth in Jordan would want to initiated measures regarding child safeguarding in sports. Thus, the possible contagion effect of this initiative could potentially be quite significant.

Monitoring, lessons learning and reporting

The existing planning and monitoring set-up of Cross Cultures and partners will be used to guide and monitor implementation and gather lessons learned. Thus, no direct extra budget expenses are previewed on monitoring as it is built into the overall process. More specifically the country coordinators of each partner will be monitoring the training and the cooperation with local stakeholders. At the annual meeting with national protection units a status will be made on the cases of referral and review of the cooperation in general. At the regional lessons-learned seminar the experiences will be systematized and shared more broadly and will feed-into Cross Cultures on-going work in Child Safeguarding in Sports also in other countries.

At the start of the intervention Cross Cultures and partners will jointly consider the reporting requirements of this CISU grant and agree on relevant sources of information to reflect the dimensions covered in the final report.

4. Information work in Denmark

Cross Cultures and Partners will communicate on this initiative via our core and key communication channels;

- Webpage
- Facebook
- GlobalNyt
- Altinget
- DAPP COM

Moreover, the peer-exchange in DIF and FC Nordsjælland and at UFM will have targeted information activities attached through their communication networks.

Two volunteers from MENA and a Danish Volunteer will form a communication group that will support the communication activities related to the project.

Finally, Cross Cultures will communicate the outcomes of this child safeguarding in sports project to the UEFA Children's Foundation, to the Council of Europe "We Talk " as an example of best practice in child safeguarding in voluntary youth led sports.

