



**INCUBATING & STRENGTHENING
SOLUTIONS FOR REFUGEES**

**A REPORT FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION
DECEMBER 2018**

Thank You

“All of us are smarter than any of us.”
David Kelley, CEO IDEO

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WHY FOCUS ON REFUGEES

Globally, there are more than 71.44 million people forcibly displaced and in need of protection and assistance.¹ Their displacement is a consequence of war, violence, political instability and climate change. This number has been projected to grow exponentially in the next 50 years.² In 2017, the Member States of the EU received 650 thousand applications for international protection from first-time asylum seekers.³

Journeys that begin with hope for a better future can lead to significant danger, fear, violence and exploitation. Even after arrival in the EU, the integration process is often grueling.

« Once they're settling in and start building a new life, many face daily racism, xenophobia and discrimination. Some people end up feeling alone and isolated because they have lost the support networks that most of us take for granted – our communities, colleagues, relatives and friends. » Amnesty International

With this reality of a large influx of people, limited resources to accommodate them, and difficult social, cultural and functional obstacles, many apply the term « crisis ». Specifically, challenges manifest as cities and reception centers struggle to address glaring needs like social inclusion cultural understanding, trauma therapy, language acquisition, educational support, employment pathways and health care.

¹ UNHCR. (2017). *Population Statistics* PopStats.unhcr.org

² European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations. (13 April 2018). *Forced displacement; refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced people*. http://ec.europa.eu/echo/what-we-do/humanitarian-aid/refugees-and-internally-displaced-persons_en

³ European Commission. (29 June 2018). *Eurostat Asylum Statistics*. ISSN 2443-8219.



Source: shutterstock

WHY A SPORTS-BASED INCUBATOR

The European Union is committed to supporting forcibly displaced people. However, right now individual Member States are struggling to find solutions. Additionally, Member State are trying to identify solutions independently.

To arrive at strong solutions, we need a shared understanding of specific challenges. This means we need to facilitate positive relationships between key stakeholders (displaced persons, local population, NGOs, institutions, city and state governments). Moreover, we need to collaboratively develop innovation in the search for solutions.

Sport is a way of achieving this. Several initiatives in the EU use sport to encourage social inclusion. However, these efforts face challenges and identify good practices in isolation.

Play International's social innovation platform, the PlayLab, created a sports-based incubator to strengthen and build the capacity for these initiatives. Through it, we identify thematic challenges and imagine solutions.

HOW SPORT PROVIDES A SOLUTION

Sport holds a unique power for overcoming social, cultural and economic barriers. It is a tool to develop skills that translate from the field, court or pitch into everyday life. It provides a common language, unifying people from diverse backgrounds over a shared interest. Relating to this, social inclusion is a specific benefit sport has been proven to provide refugees.

Research highlights four social inclusion dimensions of sports:

Spatial: brings people from various socioeconomic backgrounds together over a common interest, which is inherently valuable

Relational: provides opportunities to feel a sense of belonging (within a team, club, group or program)

Functional: offers opportunities to develop competencies that are valued socially and economically

Power: grows networks, cohesive community and civic pride.

Source: Bailey, R. (2005). Evaluation the Relationship between Physical Education, Sport and Social Inclusion. *Educational Review*, 57(1), 71-90.

Additional benefits realized through Sport for Development efforts include: language acquisition; community belonging, improved self-esteem; stress-management; developed problem-solving; cross-cultural understanding; and increased tolerance. Since 2008 there has been a 512% increase in initiatives claiming to use sport for developing peace.¹ This figure communicates a growing embrace of sport as a medium for social impact.

PLAY International's experiences combined with those of our partners, reinforce this truth: sport can ignite the social inclusion of asylum-seeking and refugee populations.

¹ Bjarsholm, D. (2017). Sport and social entrepreneurship: A review of a concept in progress. *Journal of Sport Management*, 31(2), 191-206.

PLAY INTERNATIONAL'S ROLE

PLAY International is a pioneer among NGOs that use sport as a tool for education and social change. Since 1999, we have provided access to education and inclusion for children in over 15 countries. Our niche is development, dissemination and training of tools rooted in sport- and play- based pedagogy. These tools enable inclusion, rehabilitation, education and empowerment for vulnerable populations.

In Burundi for instance, with the support of UNDP, PLAY International intervenes in four rural villages where tensions run high between local and returnee populations. Experienced animators organize daily social-sporting activities. These drastically reduce prejudices and discriminatory behavior among 2,500 children.

Several play-based programmes for refugees, like initiatives led by UNHCR or Save the Children, reinforce that play can be a creative and effective way to help tackle issues facing displaced populations.

The PlayLab: solution innovation is a collective sport

In order to deliver greater impact for social innovation through sport, PLAY International created the Playlab, a physical and virtual platform for identifying, developing and sharing initiatives that use sport to bring concrete solutions (curriculums, project engineering, etc) to social, healthcare, educational and humanitarian challenges.

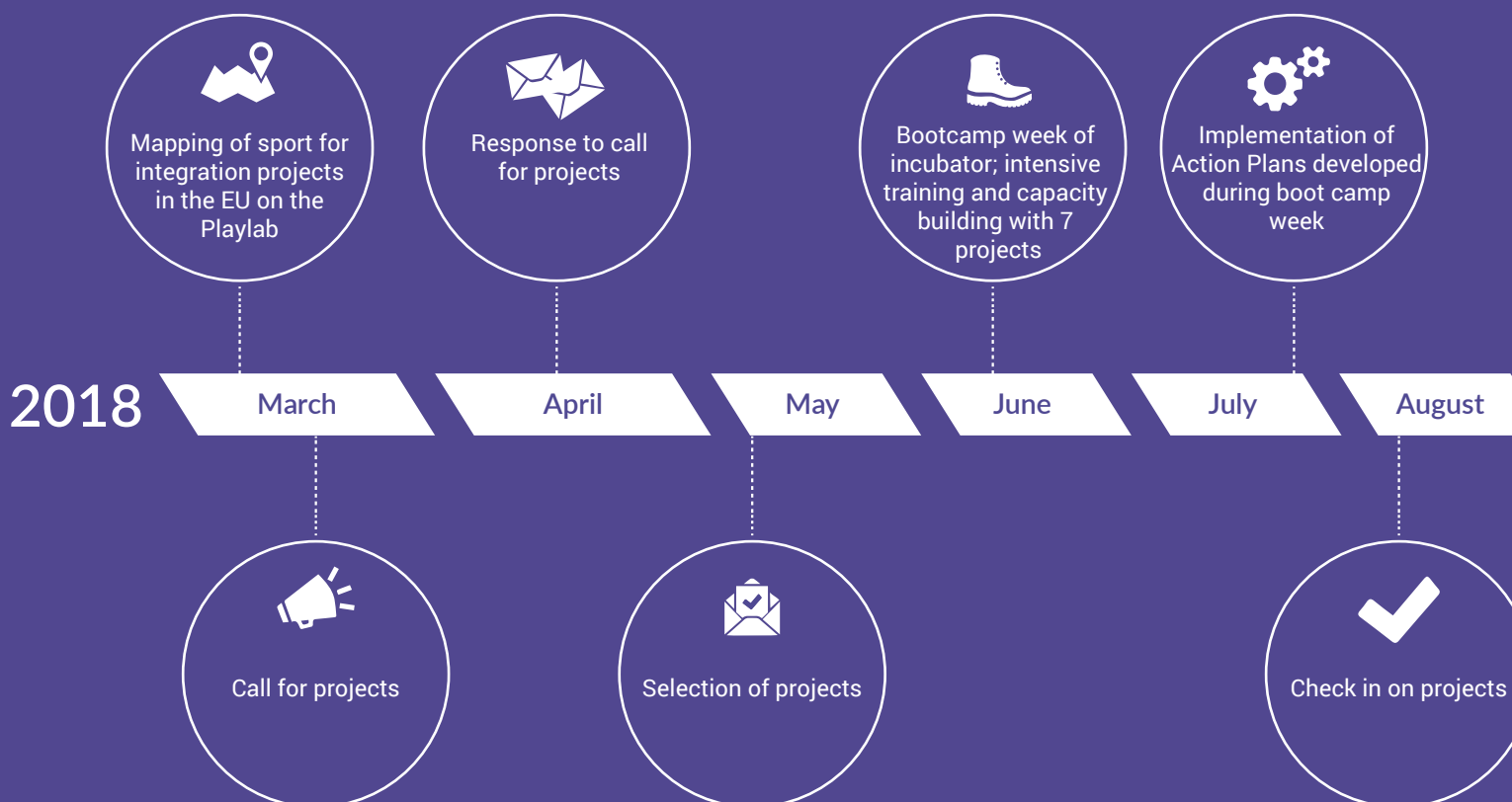
The Lab is rooted in the belief that we deliver maximum social impact through building on knowledge, ideas and experiences of one another. It is the platform where actors in the sport and social innovation sector come together and join forces in amplifying « open source » exchange.

WHAT WE CREATED

PLAY International, together with its partners, has created a catalyst for the inclusion of refugees based on existing field initiatives and social innovations using sport.

Drawing on its field experience in over 15 countries and on the Playlab, we designed and implemented an incubator that accelerates the social impact of grassroots organizations and identify concrete solutions that can be shared on a wider scale.

For this first iteration of the incubator, we built the capacity of 7 projects throughout the EU, leveraging strategic support and experience from experts in the refugee inclusion and sport for development sectors, and adhering to a collective knowledge approach.





WHO WE INCUBATED

The Playlab selected 7 projects from 7 European Union Member States. These were selected among several applicants for the innovations they are developing in their cities and for their commitment to finding and sharing sport-based solutions.

The sport initiatives and program structures are unique. The coaches, volunteers and program coordinators have broad-reaching skills and expertise. This variety is a valuable resource for learning and sharing. The bootcamp week was the springboard for connection between the Playlab, the projects, and the key partners. Webinars and strategic support that followed allowed us to exchange experiences, knowledge and ideas for solutions.

The result: a greater understanding of the sport-inclusion ecosystem in the European Union and a stronger capacity for impact.

- Aniko
- Bike & Bridge
- Futbol Mas
- INSERSport
- Kicken Ohne Grenzen
- Liberi Nantes
- The Welcoming

PROJECT: ANIKO

Lesvos, GREECE

Aniko uses the universal language of football to promote health and social inclusion for displaced people. Through Aniko Football Club, the organisation organises teams, facilitates trainings and creates tournaments between asylum-seekers, the local community and refugees. The activities provide an outlet, helping people come together, get active, learn new skills and become part of a team. In the fall of 2018, Aniko joined forces with Better Days, which provides informal education in Greece. Aniko now works with Better Days educators to deliver physical, mental and behavioral health outlets through football.

Aniko also created a framework, Football for All, which uses monthly football tournaments to bring together asylum-seekers, refugees, and local service providers (i.e. optomotrists, barbers, legal advisors). Providers offer support to beneficiaries while games take place. In this way, football works as a medium to facilitate access to necessary resources.



PROJECT: BIKEBRIDGE

Freiburg, GERMANY



BikeBridge began to tackle social isolation of female asylum-seekers and refugees, as well as pave the way for their social integration. The initiative promotes intercultural dialogue between those with a migrant background and the local population.

Over the course of three months, 12 participants and 10 trainers meet twice a week to learn how to ride a bike in theory and in practice. Language-learning games and pedagogical activities, coupled with social get-togethers outside of the trainings, complete the package. Moreover, maintenance and repair workshops empower participants with basic skills for upkeep of their bikes.

Each maintenance course finishes with certificates, bike locks and helmets awarded to participants. Cycling trainings end with city-discovery activities in cycling groups, and seasons close with team parties.



PROJECT: FUTBOL MAS

Ivry sur Seine, FRANCE



Part of the global Futbol Mas network, Futbol Mas France is a recently-launched initiative in collaboration with the relief and humanitarian support organization, Emmaus. Housed in one of Emmaus's large residential centers in Ivry-sur-Seine, France, the organization leads football integration activities with residents.

Futbol Mas applies a 6-step approach for the social development of youth aged 5-8 years old. Activities are organized within and outside of the center. It also organizes futbol integration activities for young adult men in Paris, as well as activities in the center for women and older adults. By operating inside the center, Futbol Mas directors are able to develop strong support links with residents.

PROJECT: INSERSPORT

Catelonia, SPAIN

As part of the Sports Federation Union of Cataloina's Social Action Department, the INSERSPORT program targets youth at risk of social exclusion. It uses the EU Work Plan for Sport to deliver sports training and job placement, to promote equality, and educate on healthy lifestyle habits.

Specifically, youth participants are trained in a sport, coached in implementing healthy lifestyle plans, and awarded federative certifications that allow them to work as instructors and referees. Through the INSERSport platform, youth are hired for a first job relevant to their sport-focused studies. Then, they are encouraged to use their first job as a bridge towards future employment and future studies.



 **INSERSport**

PROJECT: KICKEN OHNE GRENZEN

Vienna, AUSTRIA



Kicken ohne Grenzen is a football project working with young people forced to flee their homes. The project enables these young people to take part in regular training sessions for free without needing to fulfil any admission criteria. It also facilitates their participation in regular tournaments and access to football-specific trainings.

The organization also prioritizes empowering young women in the community. An all-female team from diverse backgrounds, collaborate with coaches to create a program that develops their self-confidence. In turn, this helps to reduce the risk of gender-based violence.

PROJECT: LIBERI NANTES

Rome, ITALY



Liberi Nantes Football Club is the first team in Italy entirely composed of refugees and asylum-seekers. Access to the training is free and open to everybody. Their offering is two-fold : 1) Open teams, composed of 80-100 refugees who play and train at a professional stadium 2) an official team, which has been playing for 10 years.

Beyond Football, Liberi Nantes offers regular monthly hiking sessions. These bring together volunteers, beneficiaries and the local community. Touch rugby is the third of their sport offerings.

During the incubation period, Liberi Nantes began engagement with local neighborhood councils and community-development groups. In this way, they've increased awareness and engagement for their sport-inclusion programs. The participation in neighborhood festivals and events also strengthens their local support-system.

PROJECT: THE WELCOMING

Edinburgh, SCOTLAND

Through a wide offering of classes and activities, The Welcoming supports migrants and refugees to build new lives in Edinburgh. All of their programs are made available on a free, drop-in basis. They focus on opportunities for locals and newcomers to share experiences, celebrate diversity and learn together. Amidst various culturally-integrative activities, The Welcoming offers a range of sports including cycling for newcomers, jogging, multi-sport game nights, gym club, and women's and children's swim.

The swim club was a special focus during incubation. It is a weekly class structured to form friendships between locals and refugee women and children. This is accomplished via dynamic interactions in class and in activities like community lunches outside of swimming sessions.



KEY CHALLENGES AND POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

The Playlab incubator's goal is to strengthen sports-based solutions for refugees. Achieving this required us to first gain a thorough understanding of what is being experienced in the field. Six months in consistent dialogue with the incubator projects, consultants and researchers gave us insights into key actors and their needs. Defining these users and needs allowed us to then identify five thematic challenges that inhibit growth and positive impact.

With these challenges defined, we now need to innovate solutions. This is where you come in.

The Playlab team has begun the process of brainstorming solutions. Now we want to bring together a diverse group of experts and build on these initial ideas.

The objective is to generate collective action with your unique perspectives. Our conference on December 18th and the Playlab digital platform create the space for this. The conference will host brainstorming sessions for each of the five challenges. The solutions developed during these sessions will be shared on the Playlab platform for the network to vote, comment and build on. Working together, the best of these solutions can be realized.

Challenge 1: How might we support **curriculum development** for refugee sport programs?

Challenge 2: How might we refine and share **monitoring and evaluation (M&E) benchmarks** and other tools that are appropriate for the sector?

Challenge 3: How might we create **new interaction models** to hybridize inclusion, education and sport sectors?

Challenge 4: How might we design more **sustainable funding** norms for the sector?

Challenge 5: How might we continue **building capacity** of sport-inclusion efforts to strengthen solutions for refugees and asylum-seekers?



CHALLENGE

1

How might we support **curriculum development** for refugee sport programs?

USER

- Grassroot program designers
- Refugee resettlement and asylum support NGOs looking to develop a sport program
- Educators within support NGOs
- Sports clubs who want to include refugees

NEED

- Pedagogical support for curriculums that
 - a) target a condition for social inclusion
 - b) differentiate asylum-seeking vs refugee populations
 - c) focus on one demographic (e.g. adolescent girls, young adult men, young mothers)

INSIGHTS

- Current programs create the conditions for inclusion through sport by providing opportunities to play, but theoretical rationale for program design is not always clear.
- Sport alone will not realize social impact objectives. The competitive nature of sport can exacerbate feelings of exclusion.
- Pedagogically-informed activities, which clarify objectives and target specific conditions for inclusion, can maximize impact.
- Social inclusion is one facet of a refugee and asylum support framework. Other needs like education, health, employment, and therapy require different expertise.
- Asylum-seekers and refugees are two distinct populations. Needs, reception in society, and priority on a political and economic level differ. However, several initiatives use one program for both groups.

- Initiatives question how to adapt to demographic groups (i.e. for adolescent girls, young adult men, single mothers).

IDEAS FOR ACTION

- Develop cycles of curriculum support with several progressive sessions in each cycle. These sessions would propose clear pedagogical objectives and activities that promote inclusion.
- An action-research initiative for curriculums that target specific needs of demographic groups (i.e. empowerment and identity for adolescent girls, trauma therapy for victims of violence, employment for young adult men, cultural engagement for mothers, education for asylum-seeking teens).

...WHAT IDEA DO YOU HAVE?



CHALLENGE

2

How might we refine and share **monitoring and evaluation (M&E) benchmarks** and other tools that are appropriate for the sector?

■ USER

- Coaches and educators (volunteer and paid)
- Stakeholders responsible for impact measurement
- Stakeholders responsible for communication and funding
- Beneficiaries engaged in the M&E processes: refugee population, asylum-seeking population, host–community participants.

■ NEED

- An objective M&E plan that identifies:
 1. Why are we conducting this evaluation?
 2. How are we going to collect the information we need?
 3. What tools will we use and with whom will we create them? They must:
 - Adapt to beneficiary situations/sensibilities
 - Be realistic for volunteers to implement

■ INSIGHTS

- Common purposes for M&E are: 1) provide evidence for sport inclusion program efficacy, 2) reports for funders, 3) measure outcomes for program targets 4) provide examples of positive change 5) Internal assessment of programs and facilitators.
- No M&E standard exists for sport inclusion initiatives. Indicators are often highly subjective.
- Beneficiaries express difficulties reading, understanding and responding to traditional written surveys & questionnaires. Volunteers and facilitators express difficulty in administering evaluations.

- Alternative approaches to M&E (drawing, games, dancing, storytelling, participatory photo and video, problem trees and poetry club) are recommended for children, for those who cannot read or write in the host language, and for creative expression.
- Resources for alternative approaches have started to surface for the sector. However, they are not widely known or used by projects.

IDEAS FOR ACTION

- A tiered peer-evaluation system, where proposed activities are evaluated by other actors: 1) after the project is defined, 2) during its implementation, and 3) at its close.
- Consider an approach that mediates relations between researchers and project educators. Those experienced with M&E can provide relevant guidance.
- Raise awareness of existing tools through supported exposure and trainings. This can be in an interactive workshop format. We can imagine breakout sessions at existing conferences, where fellow actors can test and adjust suggested tools.

...WHAT IDEA DO YOU HAVE?

CHALLENGE

3

How might we create **new interaction models** to hybridize inclusion, education and sport sectors?

■ USER

- Directors of refugee and asylum-assistance associations
- Refugees and asylum-seekers motivated to collaborate in designing and/or leading sport programs
- Coaches, trainers and educators experienced in developing sport curriculums or structuring inclusive sport programs
- Managers of sport institutions (athletic clubs)
- Sport, culture, inclusion and social innovation funders
- Local and national governing bodies (i.e. city councils, mayor's offices, sports & culture ministries)
- Sport for development, refugee inclusion, and social innovation researchers

■ NEED

- Increased collaboration between diverse actors on the design and implementation of initiatives.

■ INSIGHTS

- Sport for protection of refugees does not yet have an institutional grounding that many other efforts do (i.e. schools, ministry of education, etc). Many in the sector feel isolated and feel a constant threat about program sustainability.
- Initiatives express need for support in connecting to and structuring collaboration with relevant experts. Feelings of isolation exacerbate this threat.

- Diverse stakeholders offer strengths that others might not possess: Sport clubs provide access to resources. Coaches organize trainings and games. Resettlement centers, refugees and asylum-seekers themselves know needs and
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priorities. Governments influence the atmosphere for welcome. Researchers share trials and recommendations from the field. Educators develop pedagogically-informed sport curriculums to achieve inclusion objectives.

The Implementation Guide for Integration of Refugees

- Through Sport suggests «to illustrate support and assistance from institutional organizations to encourage integration between groups ». UEFA echoes this in a recent publication on refugee integration through Football.

Initiatives that partner with external establishments

- report greater sustainability and support.

Conferences throughout the EU successfully bring

- together diverse actors to discuss this sector. The question we pose to ourselves is « what action can we take to deliver greater impact during these conferences ? »Pilot new forms of collaboration across the sector, to: fill current gaps, shift isolated

IDEAS FOR ACTION

- efforts into more impactful & sustainable programs, and encourage non-sport organizations to use sport as a tool for inclusion.

Consider an establishment to mediate collaborative action between stakeholders, such as Paris's

- venture "Maison des Réfugiés".

Promote action-planning at existing conferences where stakeholders come together.

-

...WHAT IDEA DO YOU HAVE?



CHALLENGE

4

How might we design more **sustainable funding** norms for the sector?

■ USER

- Funders
- Grant-writers
- Executive and financial directors responsible for organizational funds

■ NEED

- Funding schemes that allow more longevity for projects, encourage sustained income stream(s), and allow greater impact

■ INSIGHTS

- A thematic need for initiatives is funding.
- Actors throughout the sector acknowledge the unsustainability of current funding norms for sport-inclusion interventions: « unsustainable one-off programmes » receive grant funding for 1-2 year periods. When funding ends, programs disappear and beneficiaries are left without a community they had come to rely on.
- Researcher Nicholas Schulenkorf suggests social business models for “sport to contribute to desired, innovative and sustained community development outcomes”. Successful initiatives include Kick4Life, Kids in the Game and love.Futbol. Funding allocated for 3-5 year periods of

IDEAS FOR ACTION

- time, with focus less on financing small, early efforts and rather on organizations with a strong foundation, from which the smaller initiatives can develop.

- A tiered funding scheme for projects, with different expectations that coincide with different abilities and project longevity. When innovations are discovered by a project and a model is developed that works, then the project automatically qualifies for new funding so it can continue developing the model and share it with others.

Funding prioritized for efforts that promote synergies between actors (e.g. Erasmus +).

- Designing Corporate Social Responsibility efforts that contribute to inclusion objectives while leveraging corporate funds allocated to community, humanitarian, and social good.

Leverage the Paris 2024 initiative for the world's first « social business olympic games » from

- which we can identify models that support inclusive sport.

...WHAT IDEA DO YOU HAVE?

CHALLENGE

5

How might we continue **building capacity** of sport-inclusion efforts to strengthen solutions for refugees and asylum-seekers?

■ USER

- Local refugee population
- Local asylum-seeking population
- Current grassroots sport efforts
- Refugee resettlement NGOs
- Local government
- Sport/culture/social inclusion funders
- PLAYlab

■ NEED

- Greater capacity-building support throughout the entirety of the project cycles

■ INSIGHTS

- The Implementation Guide for Integration of Refugees Through Sport suggests « piloting a mentoring initiative at the local club level. » Capacity building can support this effort.
- All of the projects request foundational and diagnostic support. Projects need a clear diagnostic, objectives, mission, vision, values, and strategic horizon.
- The incubator affirms that capacity-building support is valuable in strengthening solutions for refugees, particularly through sports.A

IDEAS FOR ACTION

- tiered approach to incubation with 2-3 models that can be adapted, scaled and shared. Selecting a few projects to follow and support can enable us to refine models for a specific region.
- Launch an incubator for actors who wish to replicate validated models in their city.
- Implement a training program that equips resettlement workers and sports clubs as educators. Trainings would be conducted on: needs of the community, the concept of social inclusion, relevant and adapted curricula, inclusive pedagogical methods, and validated sport inclusion models.

...WHAT IDEA DO YOU HAVE?



EXTRA IDEA PAGE

EXTRA IDEA PAGE



PLAY
INTERNATIONAL

PLAY IT HUMAN

