Best practices for evaluating sport and play-based interventions with displaced youth

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Outline

A. Background
B. Project Goals, Objectives
C. Methodology
D. Best practices for evaluating sport for protection of displaced youth
   – Preliminary results and recommendations
Background: Displaced youth and sports

Precarious position
- Youth fleeing violent contexts are in a particularly precarious position - stress and anxiety of forced displacement, economic and social loss, violence, adjusting to a new living situation

Transition period
- Transitioning from childhood to adulthood – navigating societal expectations and future opportunities – education/ employment/ family within hardship context

Particularly vulnerable
- Out of all the ‘persons of concern’ recognized by UNHCR, the majority are between the ages of 15 and 24 years (Evans et al., 2013a)

Benefits of Sport
- Sports recognized to bring physical health and contribute to positive social outcomes among displaced (UNHCR, IOC, & TDH, 2016).
Background: Displaced youth and sports

• ‘Sports for Peace and Development’ field:
  – Focus on support for vulnerable groups worldwide
  – Over 2 decades, has burgeoned into a vast movement, encompassing numerous and diverse organizations and types of initiatives globally

• “We cannot underestimate the important role of sport...[but must recognise]...that there needs to be sustainable, long-term sports programmes both in camps and urban areas where refugees live”. (As cited in UNHCR et al., 2016, p. 2)
  – International Olympic Committee (IOC) Honorary President Jacques Rogge, Secretary-Generals Special Envoy for Youth Refugees and Sport to the United Nations
Background: Displaced youth and sports
Background: Project to develop global guidelines on sport for protection of displaced youth

• Main Partners: Terre des hommes, UNHCR, IOC
• Consultative group: UNICEF, Right to Play, Fight for Peace, Peace Players International, Mercy Corps, War Child, Brock University, Swiss Academy for Development, University of Bern
  – Recognize the positive potential of sport on protection of youth
  – Acknowledge the need for a consolidated approach and guidance for carrying out sport intervention among youth in humanitarian settings including *more rigorous monitoring and evaluation processes*.
  – Are developing guidance/toolkit for conducting sports with displaced youth, *including best practices in evaluation*. 
Project Goal and Objectives

Project goal: To develop a dedicated toolkit to support staff working in the field to practically design, implement, monitor and evaluate sports projects that aim to achieve protection outcomes to ensure concrete and measurable impacts.

Objectives

a) To identify /disseminate best practices
b) To produce operational guidance on how to design and how to implement such projects
c) To provide dedicated monitoring and evaluation tools, and guidance on how to measure protection outcomes reached through sports interventions
Methodological Overview

- Literature Review
- Field visits (5 countries)
- Field Workers Survey
- Youth Survey
- Triangulation, analysis consolidation of results
- Key Informant Interviews
# Field Visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Lead Agency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>Jan 31 – Feb 6</td>
<td>Right to Play Lebanon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Feb 7 – Feb 12</td>
<td>UNHCR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rwanda</td>
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<td>Colombia</td>
<td>March 16 - 23</td>
<td>UNHCR</td>
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<td>Thailand</td>
<td>May 7 - 18</td>
<td>Various</td>
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Field Methods

- 1. In-person Key Informant Interviews
- 2. Group sessions: Participant Action Research
  - Child-centered reflective tools
  - Quantitative/Qualitative sports oriented monitoring and evaluation tools

That draw on:
- New child and youth centred approaches to Child Protection M&E (IICRD CAPE Guide, Oak Foundation)
- Building on IICRD/RTP collaboration in developing sports-focused Child Protection M&E tools
Child centred reflective tools
Development of sports oriented monitoring and evaluation tools
Best practices for evaluating sport for protection of displaced youth

Preliminary results and recommendations
Protection Issues

- Early pregnancy and early marriage
- Food insecurity and poor nutrition
- Lack of access to basic needs (food, shoes, clothing, play spaces, equipment)
- Psychosocial wellbeing, including secondary effects of conflict – everyday life challenges
  - Sense of social isolation, hopelessness, heightened aggression
- Social cohesion
- Drug abuse and alcohol
- Violence: SGBV, Domestic and Interpersonal violence (communal violence/fighting), risk of recruitment
- Unaccompanied children and youth
- Lack education or school drop outs
Benefits of Sport (according to children and youth)

**Physical:**
- Improves physical health; gives energy in the body; helps prevent disease

**Cognitive:**
- Improves to focus in school

**Psychological:**
- Helps to clear the mind; Brings peace to the mind; helps to distract from thinking about loss; brings happiness; forget problems when playing

**Social:**
- Helps to develop peaceful relationships; Make new friends (in and out of the camp setting); prevents social isolation

**Family:**
- Brings the family respect (when they win or bring home rewards); become more helpful and behave better in the home
Challenges that need to be addressed for robust process and outcome oriented M&E to be performed:

- Lack of systematic monitoring and evaluation and lack of robust and poorly defined outcomes
- Lack of monitoring and evaluation expertise and limits to short-term technical training
Challenges cont’d

- Lack of programme theory and therefore poorly defined outcomes that lack precision
- Lack of NGO staff continuity
- Little open, honest discussion of M&E challenges, opportunities and strategies
- Practical challenges: accessibility of camps, disbursed urban populations, very mobile populations
- Sustainability in programs in protracted displacement environments (at times there are purposeful short term projects)
Recommendations for M&E of Sports for protection programs for displaced youth:

• Need trust to be built with the target population
• Consider power relations and cultural factors
• Parental engagement/consent
• Consider attrition (Whitley et al., 2016).
Recommendations cont’d

• The Socio-ecological model is recommended to frame program design and M&E strategy:
  – Consideration of contextual factors in the planning phase of programmes
  – Include flexibility in the programme model to manage outside influences
  – Indicators should be for various levels: individual, community, organizational

• Share examples of best practices, compilation of sample tools
  – i.e. Terre des hommes – evaluation of psychosocial outcomes
  – i.e. RTP play-based M&E tools
Program Planning Cycle and the social environment

- Community Assessment/Formative Evaluation
- Program Planning
- Implementation/Monitoring
- Modifications to program, M&E process
- Outcome Evaluation

Individual

Family

Community

Society
Recommendations cont’d

• Participatory model and stakeholder engagement
  • Youth engagement
  • Where possible, formulate indicators through a participatory approach
    • (within broader organizational restrictions)
  • Mix quantitative and qualitative play-based methods
  • Ensure M&E schedule is simple, not too cumbersome
Ethical considerations

• Importance of program Evaluation standards
• Meaningful stakeholder engagement (not token)
• Figure: Mutually Reinforcing Relationship Between Cultural Competence and Stakeholder Engagement
  • Source: Gill, Kuwahara, Wills (2016), p. 5
Next Steps

- 1 more field visit to conduct – Thailand (CBO, Endogenous sports)
- Additional Key Informant Interviews
- Ongoing collaboration with the Steering Committee and Consultative Group
- Complete analysis, synthesize for final guidelines
- Develop dissemination strategies

Next phase of project: Pilot guidelines, including M&E strategies
Thank You!
Feedback welcomed 😊

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• The children and youth who have shared their stories and perspectives
• Coaches and staff/ field staff working with sports program