

Sport Welcomes Refugee- A good Practice Guide

The organization understand the sports initiative a primary tool to defend refugees' human rights as well organizing cultural events in order to establish a more tolerant and friendly atmosphere in the local societies. The organization overall provides legal assistance to asylum seekers, organizes integrating projects in education and sports whilst attempting to massage the Hungarian mentality against foreigners and offering migrants the space to better integrate into the society.

Current status of Hungarian Government and their position on Refugees, Migrants and Asylum seekers.

The Hungarian government has been for the past two years been under scrutiny for its regressive policy approach toward refugees and migrants. As a relatively new entrant into the EU, Hungarian policy around refugees and migrants has caused much controversy as it specifically denies the entry, support and assistance of refugees, whether coming through or seeking asylum. The Hungarian government has proceeded to close all refugee camps and converted them into detention centers. The detention centers are shipping containers where asylum seekers and refugees are held until their cases are heard via video link. One imagines this a one of the measures taken to repel refugees from the country, Orban, the Prime Minister has referred to asylum seekers and refugees as "Trojan horses for terrorism". Orban's government has further put forward that organizations working in the area or migration, refugee and asylum seeker assistance will be sanctioned through more taxation from any funding received toward this effort. This has caused significant issues concerning the stability and future of organizations or institutions involved in the assistance of refugees and migrants further heightening the refugee/migrant crisis in Hungary.

The support from the public sector has been retracted not only from funding, but from any kind of support geared toward refugees and migrants, whether concerning their settlement or entrance.

The MGHRO has been involved in sports as a means of awareness and inclusion of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. The organization has been able to implement these activities and projects through the former assistance of the Hungarian government

Refugees are understood to be a burden, along with diluting the cultural fiber of the Hungarian people. It is understood as per current policy narrative that refugees and migrants for the most part, will cause the dissolution of Hungarian culture and they further will be a state burden, wrought unsavourybehaviour, infecting the local cultural phenomenon.

- How far is sport used as a tool for inclusion of refugees? Who is conducting activities for integration and inclusion (e.g. national football association, local sport clubs, refugee support initiatives)

The MGHRO has been conducting sports activities, specifically narrowed toward the inclusion of migrants and refugees and the awareness of the Hungarian community, since its inception. Another organisation in which we have worked with briefly was the art mission, however their presence regarding sports activities was short-lived.

The Hungarian football federation over the years has assisted MGHRO with financial and technical support in order to

get the team together. In this way the national federation was key in assisting to build a local migrant/refugee team even if the federation was not directly involved in its inception and sustainability. The support has since halted as a result of the intensifying political and policy climate, which rejects the presence, assistance and support of refugees.

- Are there any programmes by national, regional or local public authorities for the inclusion of refugees?

As mentioned above, the national Football Federation, through the MGHRO were and are the only public organisation concerned with assisting a refugee and migrant focused sports team. They assisted through the finance and technical equipment support. The MGHRO has also received financial assistance from the Szeged Catholic Church, however this was on a more ad hoc basis and was not as consistent at the national football federation. There are more local partnerships which can be made as per inclusion and joint events, however on the financial support front it has become more difficult to garner support from public institutions simply because we are a refugee/ migrant soccer team.

We have partnered with local school, in order to bring about awareness, acceptance and understanding within local schools through sports activities. These are school focused on social inclusion as assisting with further entrenching a different understanding of refugees and migrants as they partner with us.

Mahatma Gandhi Human Rights Organization together with VajdaPéter Musical Primary and Sport school, Council of Józsefváros and Educational Centre of Central Pest organized a sport event in the framework of the European Week of Sport. The venue of this event was VajdaPéter School in Budapest and the activities took place on 20th and 21st of September 2017 from the morning until the afternoon. The official opening ceremony took place at 10:00 and consisted of speeches of Mrs. PéternéSántha – deputy mayor of Józsefváros, Mrs. SzabónéSzél Julianna - the director of VajdaPéter School, Mr. GibrilDeen – president of the Mahatma Gandhi Human Rights Organization and Mr. BorkaGábor – sports teacher at VajdaPéter School. Many students from several Hungarian primary schools participated (Losonci, Deák-Diák, Németh, Molnár, Örömhír, Lakatos, Vajda) including migrant students from Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq, Nigeria, China living in Budapest. Pupils took part in various sport activities, such as football, table tennis, rope climbing, running, yoga and breathing exercises.

HFF - <https://en.mlsz.hu/>

VajdaPéter Musical Primary - <http://www.vajdaiskola.hu/english>

Educational Centre of Central Pest- <https://jokepzes.hu/hu/kepzoek/Central-European-Vocational-Educational-Centre-Kft/22>

- When sport is used as a tool for inclusion of refugees: What are most common types of sport used for inclusion? Which target groups are reached?

We have used soccer for adults, running races for young kids between 8 -12 and are now working on a project which specifically focused on the inclusion of women.

- Are there efforts to reach women and girls as a special target group?

MGHRO has partnered with UISP and other organizations to bring about a Women in Sporting initiative, to be implemented in 2019. It focuses on the education, training and empowering of women through sports and coaching.

The project is to promote voluntary activities in sport, together with social inclusion, equal opportunities and awareness of the importance of health-enhancing physical activity through increased participation in, and equal access to, sport for all

Aims

Enhance the participation of migrant and minority women and girls in sport and recreational physical activity
 Increase understanding of the barriers that female minorities and newly-arrived migrants (asylum seekers, refugees) face to access sport
 Identify successful strategies to reach migrant and ethnic minority women and girls and to involve them actively in sports
 Empower, increase qualification and building capacities of female sport actors and multipliers with migrant or minority background
 Raise awareness about the ‘hidden’ contribution of migrant and minority women to sport and increase their visibility
 Advocacy for policy change within public authorities and sport governing bodies (e.g. regulations on wearing the hijab in sport)

- When sport is used as a tool for inclusion of refugees: Which outreach strategies are successfully used in your country?

What has been successful is the building of the soccer, as it has granted the team members ownership and belonging. It has further provided them with a routine, and occupied their time with involvement in the community and with the community through playing sports games.

Being part of a team has encouraged the team members to want to embark on positive activity in settling and integrating into the community.

Best practice examples

MGHRO African star football team, founded in 1994, has been fortunate enough to have a multi-ethnic/national team. The team consists predominantly of African players, however also has Asians and South Americans; and everyone on the team is either a former refugee or is a migrant with legitimate legal status. This has granted the opportunity for the players to share in experiences both good and bad, regarding their integration into the communities they live. Thus the players are able to lean on each other and the process of acclimating and integrating becomes less burdensome on them. The sharing of each one's perspective allows each of them to better interact with local Hungarians and approach their integration into the local communities in more patient and strategic manner, where they are understood and seen as allies as opposed to threats in local Hungarian communities.

As stated above the objective of MGHRO has always been through the multi-ethnic team we are enabled to test and see our theory meaning that it is achievable to re-shape the mentality around different ‘races’ and ethnicity through platforms of positive interaction.

Having a multi-ethnic soccer team/sports team

Target groups

Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

Outreach strategies (access to target groups)

Every year we afford new people to sign up for the even if they come join the team as a social activity.

Activities

We have soccer practice every week and hold matches every weekend so everyone interacts twice a week.

We participate in Hungarian Lower league Tournaments

In 2009 we won the Anti-racism World Cup held in Italy

Framework (context, resources, cooperation etc.)

Unicef 10 points, Fare, European Week of Sports, EU reports

Specific challenges/problems/success

The growing social tension in the political atmosphere in Hungary is continuing to make it harder to receive funding and maintain what we currently have. Penetrating newer spaces will also prove to be more difficult as elections are coming up and the politics of the moment are setting the narrative around who interacts with us and how they interact with us.

Effects/impact

The players will begin to be demotivated and will feel helpless as a result of the socio-political tensions, which influence their attendants and participation in the team. This will put pressure on the team and the organisation as this will make it harder for use to participate in the local and regional tournaments.

Local and international Partnering

Target groups

Local schools and organizations in the field of migration/refugee work. International organizations working the field of Migration and refugees.

Outreach strategies (access to target groups)

Communicate and build partnerships with local and international organisations, enabling the organisation more reach and the reception of more support.

Activities

MGHRO partners in developing support, communication and development projects around migrants and women and children.

Framework (context, resources, cooperation etc.)

EU project proposals calls and contributions.

Specific challenges/problems/success

The management of these relationships as a means achieving the desired objectives of the projects developed.

Effects/impact

Through partnerships and collaborations a community and network is built, enabling more voices around the ills experienced by migrants and refugees from the Hungarian society and the world at large.

Holding integrated sports events

Target Group

The local schools and churches whom are interested in working with MGHRO.

Outreach strategies (access to target groups)

MGHRO having been working in Budapest for has established a reasonable network of schools and organisations which we are able to partner with in holding integrated sports events for kids between 8-12 and holding soccer matches with local Hungarian teams.

Activities

Races, Soccer matches and Sports days.

Frameworks

Fare, European Week of Sports, EU reports.

Specific challenges/problems successes

Challenges: The growing social tensions around migrants and refugees

Successes: We held a race for kids and soccer tournament with one of the local primaries along with some higher learning institutions.

Effects/Impacts

This will decrease the amount of interactions and partnerships we are able to create. However only time will tell how the greater society responds to the socio-political climate.