

# **Barriers and future opportunities for sport and non-sport organisations to use sport and physical activities for inclusion of refugees**

*Results of a stakeholder consultation in the MOVE Beyond project*

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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This report summarises the results of a stakeholder consultation of sport and non-sport organisations exploring the use of sport for societal inclusion of refugees and the role that cross-sector collaboration can play in it. The stakeholders identified broad benefits of providing sport to refugees, related to the refugees themselves as well as sport and non-sport organisations, and local communities. While the reasons for offering sport to refugees can differ, the benefits mentioned largely coincide. The stakeholders identified several barriers refugees encounter in order to participate in sport, which, in turn, are related to challenges organisations have to overcome to include them.

The differences between sport and non-sport organisations were identified as an advantage to collaboration. Apart from pooling and sharing resources, complementing expert knowledge and networks are expected to make the service delivery stronger. Reflecting on perceived challenges to the collaboration, the stakeholders identified difficulties in establishing and maintaining a qualitative collaboration. Summarising the different approaches that the stakeholders mentioned, the report reflects on the most conducive environment in which to include refugees and formulates guidelines for organisations planning to collaborate in order to include refugees.

## 2. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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This report is based on the results of stakeholder consultations and an online survey conducted by Demos and ISCA between January and September 2019. The stakeholder consultation and survey's objectives were to describe and analyse the barriers for non-sport organisations to use or partner with sport organisations and physical activity providers for social inclusion of refugees.

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### 3. CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

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The project “**MOVE Beyond – involving key partners in sport for refugees**” has as its overall aim to enhance cross-sector collaboration in the use of grassroots sport and physical activities for societal inclusion of refugees by enabling stronger involvement of non-sport actors.

Together with the results of focus groups with refugees, this report should help the implementation partners to strengthen their collaborative pilot projects. Drawing from the impact and experience of these projects, MOVE Beyond aims to contribute to mainstreaming the use of sport for inclusion of refugees.

This is an ambitious aim that includes a lot of big words. With key stakeholders coming from different countries, working in varying fields and having diverse educational backgrounds, it was useful to get some clarity on the terms that are being used in the project. During the meetings with the key stakeholders, we discussed several of them. We decided not to focus on definitions. There was no need for that. The stakeholders understood each other. Where necessary, nuances were made.

Below we reflect on the meanings of key terms. It roughly reflects the consensus among the stakeholders. We think it is important to share this in order to come to a shared understanding.

**On refugees** – Some people move to another country to escape conflict or persecution. In this form of migration, people are an ‘asylum seeker’ and, when granted a protection status, are termed a ‘refugee’. However, people migrate for other reasons as well. The terms ‘asylum seeker’, ‘refugee’ and ‘migrant’ carry different obligations and consequences. In the daily life context, it is difficult, and often irrelevant, to tell the difference. Somebody can be in the process of getting, or has been granted some status, temporarily or permanently, as a migrant or as refugee. So, the terms are often used to mean one and the same thing.

In preparation for this stakeholder consultation we decided not to predefine what or who ‘refugees’ are. When we use the term ‘refugee’, we are talking about a heterogeneous group with a variety of needs and hopes, depending on age, gender, health, family status, employment, education, cultural background, etc. This variation is more important for understanding refugees’ engagement with civil society and sports than these legal labels.

Compared to most migrants, refugees suffer more from severe psychological, educational and financial problems. This is because in most cases refugees have to move involuntarily following traumatic experiences in their homeland. That having been said, refugees do tend to share similar challenges to migrants on arrival in Europe, particularly in relation to the potential for local social inclusion through sports.

**On sport** – The term ‘grassroots sport’ is mainly used for physical activities that are organised and non-organised at a non-professional level for health, leisure or social purposes. When we use ‘sport’ and ‘sport-organisation’, this was the description stakeholders had in mind during our consultations. But we did not limit ourselves to this form of sport. We also consulted professional and highly competitive sport clubs. Some stakeholders placed more emphasis on fun and play than on the competitive aspects of sport. Others approach sport more as a means than an end.

Readers can assume the term ‘grassroots sport’ reflects best what stakeholders understood under the term ‘sport’. Just like it was the case during our discussions, when necessary, we will specify what is being understood as ‘sport’.

**On barriers** – Our task was to consult stakeholders, both sport and non-sport organisations, on the barriers they face while aiming to reach or include refugees in sport. The stakeholders drew our attention to a wide range of challenges. We focused specifically on the barriers refugees experience to participate in sport and on the barriers they themselves, as organisations, had to overcome to include refugees. We approached these barriers as pivotal in exploring the motivation and need for cross-sector collaboration.

There are many barriers that limit opportunities to participate in sports. Not being interested in sport, limited transport, high costs, lack of time and no suitable offer being available are ranked as the top 5 factors in almost every research. We didn't expect these barriers to be different for refugees. Looking at facilitating participation on the other hand, pointed us to more meaningful nuances.

When it comes to facilitators that enable participation, interpersonal, organisational and community aspects come more to the forefront. People are the most important facilitators; they make the biggest difference. Participation is most often stimulated by family, friends or people in our broader social network. But these are things refugees are often disconnected from or are not yet in contact with when arriving in a new country. The other effective facilitators are communication and identification. You have to know or be informed about existing sport opportunities in order to identify or connect with them. To this end, organisational culture, customs, attitudes and skills of staff or volunteers play an important role. When you are not sharing the same language or cultural background, things don't feel very normal or identifiable.

In short, we gained an insight on barriers as being all of the different challenges refugees, sport and non-sport organisations face while organising or participating in sports.

**On integration and social inclusion** – Terms like 'integration' and 'inclusion' are hotly debated. Migrants and refugees are often perceived negatively and blamed for 'not being properly integrated'. In this way, integration is understood as assimilation. And even when refugees are accepted by local communities, they are often acknowledged as a separate group and engaged in terms set by the majority group.

For the stakeholders, integration incorporates a sense of belonging, feeling respected, valued for who you are, feeling supported and commitment from others. In this understanding, 'inclusion' is a more preferred term. It implies that both the host community and the migrant population change because they participate in the same aspects of everyday life as equals.

Stakeholders also stressed that it would be useless to talk about inclusion without addressing processes of exclusion. Stakeholders say that in general more attention should be paid to the well-being of refugees in the asylum system. They mentioned, the changing public mood towards refugees and the rise of populist, anti-immigrant parties in many European countries. Several stakeholders pointed out that policies on different levels were becoming more and more restrictive regarding the reception and integration of refugees.

**On collaboration** – To most stakeholders working in partnerships with people from different professional backgrounds was not new. They all tend to agree that the best approach to including target groups is to integrate their needs with the needs of local communities and other target groups. In this approach, working collaboratively and coordinated across sectors aims to create a triple win, benefiting refugees, the organisations involved and the local communities.

Reflecting on this more integrated approach, the stakeholders touched on the question if a sport offered to refugees should be inclusive or rather categorical. Should it focus on a mix of people or on a defined group, i.e. exclusively on refugees? The stakeholders debunked the reasoning that having programs specifically for refugees is counter-productive to the integration process. They stated that both approaches are relevant. None of them is wrong or better and that both can further social inclusion.

## 4. METHODOLOGY

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This mixed methods stakeholder consultation was conducted between 9 May 2019 and 12 August 2019, engaging with a total of 19 organisations and 24 individuals. The study comprised two separate, yet closely interlinking, strands:

a) **19 semi-structured interviews** of which:

- 10 interviews were conducted with individuals from 10 sport organisations
- 14 interviews were conducted with individuals from 9 non-sport organisations
- 3 interviews were conducted with people who had previously been refugees

b) **One online questionnaire** was conducted between 15 August and 15 September 2019 via Survey Monkey and direct e-mail by the implementation partners, Demos and ISCA. It was completed by a total of 41 respondents. Importantly, 21 of the survey respondents identified themselves as 'sport organisations' and 20 as 'non-sport organisations', giving an even distribution of response types. Only 4 respondents identified that refugees were not (yet) a target group in their organisation.

**Interviews** - We could not get more than one chance to interview someone. We opted for a semi-structured interview. The interviews were based on open-ended questions, following a fixed topic list. To facilitate an open dialogue, we opted not to email the topic list to the interviewees in advance. We encouraged free and informal conversation, following the lead of interviewees, in order to touch on a broader range of issues and experiences. The interviews were conducted via Skype. We tape-recorded the interviews with consent of the interviewee. They were later transcribed for analysis.

The transcriptions of the interviews were structured and quantified on several themes. On each theme we made a distinction between sport and non-sport organisations in order to gain insight into similarities and differences. We used this analysis to structure this summary report and the online questionnaire.

**Online questionnaire** - Stakeholders stressed that the online survey should not take longer than 15 minutes to complete and should be widely distributed. For this reason, we opted for ranking survey questions. We paraphrased the five most common answers to different themes that were the focus of the stakeholders' consultations in order to measure respondent's opinion or attitude towards a given statement. In this way we hope to find if stakeholders' answers were also supported more widely by professionals and volunteers in the field. The distinction between sport and non-sport organisations was also made in the questionnaire.

## 5. FINDINGS

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### 5.1 Benefits of providing sport to refugees

Planning collaboration to include refugees is all about finding a good match. Just like dating, it starts with putting yourself out there. You have to know why including refugees is important to your organisation and let that know to other organisations. The assumption is that, when aims and objectives of both sport and non-sport organisations coincide, collaborating will be easier.

In the stakeholder analysis we wanted to find out if sport-organisations and non-sport organisations had matching aims and objectives. During the interviews we asked both groups what, in their experience, the most important benefits are of providing sport to refugees. Both for refugees and for the organisation. Benefits can be regarded as desired outcomes, both intentionally or more implicitly. Defining these more clearly can help organisations to clearly formulate objectives and align them with each other. In short; why are you doing it? And why is it important?

It was reassuring to find out that the benefits mentioned by both sport and non-sport organisations largely coincide. They both genuinely and sincerely advocate that sport provides an appropriate setting for social inclusion of refugees. Relating to outcomes, both groups most often mention a commitment to the well-being of refugees, the possibilities sport offers them to build broader social networks and to the development of language skills.

Claims of the power of sport to improve peoples' lives are often made as a truism. This was overwhelmingly the case with our stakeholders. However, several stakeholders mention incidents where refugees experience exclusion, racism and cultural resistance in sport. The stakeholders stated that sport can lead to improved social inclusion, new friendships, and increased well-being of refugees. But it can also result in exclusion, alienation, and misery. They stress that positive and effective outcomes of sport depend on both the kind of activities that are being organised, the context in which they are organised and who is organising them.

**For non-sport organisations** consulted during the interviews, providing leisure and free time to refugees is very important. Providing leisure and free time to refugees as distraction from their precarious situation was also ranked as the most important benefit of providing sport to refugees in the survey. The day-to-day life of refugees in asylum centres is often monotonous, stressful and overall difficult. Their world is mentally and often physically limited to the asylum centres. Every form of distraction is welcomed in this context. Sport gives refugees a purpose during the day, a break from the everyday routine. But the aims and objective to provide sport go deeper.

***"It (self-defence classes) was a break from all the demands of being in the system (immigration system). A mental break from the miseries. I made new friends who were in the same situation, but also white friends. They are treated the same as the others."***

During the study visits the stakeholders learned that a lot of refugees are dealing with feelings of helplessness, lack of personal purpose and low self-esteem. They feel inadequate and not fit for or adapted to their situation. They find it hard to find out what is expected of them. Most of them had very different expectations upon arrival and felt like they are failing. All of this leads to frustration, destructive behaviour and sometimes depression. For most non-sport organisations, getting refugees active, sweating, yelling, cheering and ending up physically tired is the most feasible way to – at least temporarily – help refugees deal with these feelings. They emphasised the opportunities sport present for refugees to escape the harsh reality of life. In the survey, bettering the physical and/or mental well-being of refugees was ranked as the third most important benefit of providing sport to refugees.



*“Doing sports is like having a free space in your mind”.*

*“A young man who had mental health issues because he had lost his sister on the way from Libya to Europe. Initially, when he arrived here, he was just ‘ok’. His troubles only started after he was here for a while. The risk was that he would be admitted to psychiatrist institution. He found a football club with a very good coach who showed understanding, talked with him about his worries. After some time, with the fact that he made friends in the club as well, he was able to regain his life. Joining the club may have saved him from being institutionalised.”*

In addition to an outlet, stakeholders mentioned that sport offers refugees a sense of belonging, to a team or a club. Something positive they could identify with. Being good at sport or winning was mentioned as an acknowledgment of self-worth and good for someone's self-esteem. It could even be a form of prestige in the group. Several stakeholders said this was also the case when refugees were taking on responsibilities as an organiser or volunteer.

Refugees are often housed in centres far away and in hard-to-reach places. They are confined for longer periods of time. This, in some cases, results in tension among refugees. Stakeholders mentioned providing sport also helps to release tension in the asylum centre and to create a better atmosphere. Providing sport activities brings refugees together and helped to bridge differences in social and cultural backgrounds among refugees.

*“The connection with other people helps a lot as well in reducing the effects of isolation. Being with fellow human beings and doing fun sport activities together distracts refugees from their own miseries even if for just a little while.”*

It was mainly non-sport organisations who told us that, even after leaving an asylum centre, refugees mainly interact with people who are in the same situation as they are, or with public servants and professional from social agencies. There are limited opportunities to connect with the local population. In this context, it is not easy to bridge cultural differences and build relationships and networks. Together with providing leisure, providing an opportunity to meet people was ranked as the most important benefit of providing sport to refugees in the survey. Almost all non-sport organisation mentioned this as important objective during the stakeholder consultation. They mention sport as being an icebreaker into the integration process or as opening a door to the local community. The interaction during training and competition and especially during activities that are more aimed at community building, facilitate refugees in meeting and networking with people from local communities.

*“Due to the football tournaments they organised, several youths got invited and joined some local clubs and are still playing there up to now.”*

*“Refugees say to feel more confident in going into the city because they know people (that they have met though the sport club). Being able to recognise people on the street is empowering and makes one feel at home.”*

Some non-sport organisations mention that participating in sport can help introduce refugees to other activities or services that are offered to them, like language classes, vocational training or further education. Some stakeholders also stress that sport creates a different context, changing the relationship between staff and refugee. They mention instances where talking about difficult issues became easier due to the changed relation or context.



***“The relationship is different when you do activities together with the target group – refugees. It is not a helper and the one being helped.”***

For most **sport organisations** we consulted, including refugees is not an insurmountable challenge. Including and helping vulnerable populations came natural to them. They made broad claims that refugees are an opportunity for both sport clubs and the communities, in several ways. Notwithstanding, they also mentioned how difficult it is for refugees to participate in existing sport clubs, and that it is challenging for sport organisations to include them. This is because refugees are commonly expected to find out what is available and to fit in an unfamiliar environment. Sport organisations, on the other hand, often act on good intentions, but with little to no knowhow.

In the stakeholder consultation sport organisations approach refugees first and foremost as a new or prospecting member of the club. There is always the possibility of stumbling upon a top athlete, an excellent trainer or super volunteer. This does not appear to be a targeted strategy. Targeting refugees aiming at developing the sport clubs with new members, potential volunteers, and new knowledge was ranked the least important benefit of providing sport to refugees.

Sport organisations find it important that refugees connect with the other members of the club. Getting to know the members, becoming accustomed to the club culture and way of working are important objectives for sport organisations. Learning the language or more about the new community are mentioned more as outcomes arising therefrom. In the survey, the opportunity for refugees to develop skills was ranked the third important benefit of providing sport to refugees.

***“It is not a Syrian football session; it is just a football session. It is a common interest and so they are engaging just as equals. This does influence the public opinion positively. They start to see the refugees as human beings, teammates, friends...”***

***“Due to the football tournaments they (non-sport organisation) organised, several youths got invited and joined some local clubs and are still playing there up to now.”***

Almost all sport organisations consulted are convinced that sport is useful to refugees in extending their social networks. In the survey providing a context where the local community and refugees interact (building social network, social cohesion, integration...) was ranked the most important benefit of providing sport to refugees. But in the interviews, most emphasis was put on sense of belonging a sport organisation could provide. Sport organisations said this belonging is an important aim in sport and can give refugees a sense of identity and self-worth. In sport there is the shared experience of very different people all committed to the same cause. These aspects of sport were often mentioned in relation to the mental well-being of refugees.

***“People who, due to taking part in the sport activities, learned the language in turn boosted their self-confidence. They became more active and dared to engage more in conversations because they were learning the language... One went ahead to become an ambassador for refugees by going to give talks about the situation of refugees.”***

Several sport organisations emphasised that contributing to something good for people who are facing highly challenging life situations as being very meaningful for the organisation itself. They believe, and have seen, that everyone involved in such projects i.e. coaches, trainers and volunteers feel a great sense of reward and self-development throughout the process. Being able to help and do something for others better the atmosphere in the club and makes trainers, coaches and volunteers happier.



*“Working with refugees helps locals reflect more in life. It makes them realise how lucky they actually are and how much they actually do have. Refugees have helped me rediscover the joy of life.”*

*“The way refugees appreciate even the smallest of things, they look at small things like mountains, makes me appreciate what I have even more.”*

Some stakeholders mention instances where refugees helped to keep the sport organisation to stay alive, especially in small villages. Due to lack of members, the refugees were welcomed. The willingness to include and work with refugees is believed to be greater in these places. In various cases, stakeholders mention that the participating refugees grew to become volunteers, supplementing the staff with much needed insight and knowledge of the target group. This can also point to outcomes related to social integration and community cohesion.

*“When you give, you receive more in return. Helping others, especially those in dire need, is an enriching and humbling experience. It brings the joy of life to the helper”*

Relating sport to outcomes like integration and social inclusion was self-evident to all stakeholders. They mentioned that sport activities are easy to communicate across different cultures. The non-verbal format of sport makes it easier to overcome linguistic and cultural barriers than other types of activities. Everybody seems to agree that play by way of sports is a quasi-universal activity almost everyone can relate to. This makes it easier for refugees to interact in the broader community and vice versa.



A remarkable outcome of our stakeholder interviews was that both sport and non-sport organisations mentioned countering stereotyping and prejudice as an important benefit. This was confirmed in the survey. Both sport and non-sport organisations ranked breaking down cultural barriers and changing perceptions as the second most important benefit of providing sport to refugees. This emphasised the importance of sports in changing views and attitudes towards each other, both refugees and members of the local communities. The often problematised and polarised opinions on migration widens the gap between people. Stakeholders mentioned the popularity and positive attitude towards sport as beneficial in closing that gap. Both groups found it important to set an example, to show to the general public that it is possible to sport together and that it is beneficial, not only to refugees or sport organisations, but to the society at large.

*“Most of the activities are mixed: local people and refugees. So, people get to see the human side of refugees and see that they are not a threat.”*

*“(In sport) They become one of the many participants and not specifically ‘refugee’. They are seen as human beings rather than the problematic group.”*

*“Locals, who never sat and ate with refugees before due to the false information they had about refugees, are now very confident and positive to interact with refugees.”*

*“They (the sport team) were also invited to the local university, schools, radio... to speak about the situation of refugees and their experiences. This kind of actions help to change the rhetoric about refugees. Especially when the locals (the refugees’ teammates) talk about their friendships and the shared values and interests.”*

The benefits and outcomes both sport and non-sport organisations mention run largely parallel. Notwithstanding, we must be aware of any underlying differences. Not every outcome is mentioned specifically as an aim or objective. We have to take into account that sport and non-sport organisations start from different perspectives related to more sector-specific characteristics, objectives or targets. Non-sport organisations can be expected to focus more on the social character of sport, stressing more functional outcomes. Then, they see refugees first as people who need ‘support’ in one form or another. Sport, then, is foremost a means to an end. As a result, attention to the quality of the sport offer may become less important. Sport organisations can be expected to put more emphasis on the benefits of participation of refugees to their club. Then, they see refugees first as a new members or volunteers, as a potential asset to the club. Limiting a more targeted focus on more individual and social benefits of sport. Based on the ranking in the survey common ground can be found in approaching sport as a context where the local community and refugees can interact and using the power of sport to break down cultural barriers and change perceptions and prejudices.

## 5.2 Barriers and challenges to overcome

All stakeholders had experience in offering sports to refugees so they had a good idea of the barriers refugees had to overcome. They were also able to indicate the challenge they themselves, as organisations, had to overcome. In this chapter we make a synthesis of the different barriers that refugees and both sport and non-sport organisations encountered.

First, we focus on **the barriers the refugees encountered**. During the interviews, we asked both groups what, from their experience, were the most significant barriers refugees had to overcome in order to participate in sport. When analysing the interviews, we looked for facilitators and aspects that motivate refugees to participate in a sport offer. Both barriers and facilitators were included in the survey.

When aiming to include refugees, nearly all the stakeholders say they follow the needs and aspirations of refugees. All stakeholders stress that the refugees' motivation to sport should be central to any endeavour. Play, fun and friendships (i.e. social aspects of sport) were also ranked as the most important facilitators in the survey.

Stakeholders most often referred to the motivation of refugees in sport in terms of fun, connectedness and belonging. To refugees, sport is first and foremost an informal meeting place. It is a fun way to connect to other people and make friends. It is also a place to belong, where they can be part of something positive, something that is bigger than themselves. This refers to the social components of sport, but also to the opportunity sport offers to take up responsibility, to make a difference to someone. This sense of belonging (group dynamic, being part of something bigger...) was ranked as the second most important facilitator in the survey.

Most of the sports that are usually offered are indeed fun and enjoyable but have an important focus on competition. The emphasis lays more on sport technical and tactical aspects. Certain physical standards are expected. As a consequence, more emphasis during training is put on physical skills, strength and endurance. Like anyone, refugees can find it difficult to estimate whether they meet the club's requirements or feel hesitant to engage in sport because they feel unfit or not very skilled. In general, the stakeholders state that there is not much sport on offer that refugees easily can tap into. There is generally a high entry barrier due to technical, tactical and physical aspects.

At the same time, some stakeholders indicate that some of the sports practiced by refugees in their home country are not or less frequently available in the country of arrival. The chances for refugees of finding a suitable sport offer in the local community are rather limited. This is an important structural barrier.

Several stakeholders emphasise that sport is often not the (top) priority of refugees. They point to issues that arise out of the precarious situation of refugees. First, needs concerning food, clothing, work, schooling and housing are more pressing and often overwhelming. They demand a lot of energy and time. And even when energy and time is not an issue, refugees often feel like they are not entitled to leisure or downtime. Secondly, there is the uncertainty of being in an asylum procedure. At any moment refugees can be moved to another location or deported. Stakeholders say some refugees find it difficult to commit or invest in new relationships faced with this uncertainty. In this, they do not only take themselves into consideration. They also take into account the people they potentially have to leave behind. This does not mean refugees are not interested in sport. Their motivation to sport is challenged in a very specific way.

When in an asylum centre, and certainly the first few years, refugees are consumed with other priorities than leisure. Apart from time, stakeholders mention the available financial resources generally follow these priorities. This ensures that refugees are not able or willing to make budget available for free time. The cost of participating to sport is most often mentioned as a barrier to participate in sport. Apart from membership fees, equipment, uniform and transport, more 'hidden costs' like a drink afterward or the annual fundraising dinner were mentioned.

Time commitment and financial factors shape more personal barriers refugees have to overcome. Stakeholders also mention barriers that challenge interpersonal relations.

Language is most often mentioned. The inability to speak or read the local language makes it difficult for refugees to inform themselves on how to get involved. In particular, the lack of information on a suitable sport offer is most emphasised. Most stakeholders say there are too little opportunities or mechanisms linking refugees with sport. Linguistic barriers are also mentioned making it difficult for refugees to gain familiarity with the sport offer or to get acquainted with the culture or customs of the organisation delivering the sport offer.

There is always a kind of embarrassment or awkwardness to overcome when engaging people in another language. But some stakeholders also mention more cultural related barriers. Sport culture can involve swearing, drinking or other thing that are culturally inappropriate to some refugees. Sometimes barriers can be gender specific. Some stakeholders mention girls and women have more difficulties to engage in sport due to cultural differences and less gender-specific sport offers.

Other stakeholders point out that refugees can have a diverging perception of sports because recreational sports were not available to them in their home country. Unfamiliarity could be a more obvious barrier than language or culture.

Other barriers are rather practical. Several stakeholders say limited access to suitable spaces and facilities to sport is an important barrier refugees have to overcome. Sport facilities are often quite far from asylum centres, so cost and unfamiliarity with public transportation are mentioned. But a sense of safety is also mentioned, both in a physical and psychological way. Stakeholders say that sometimes facilities are more convenient and accessible to refugees, but not all well suited to sport. On the other side, existing sport facilities sometimes may not be the most supportive environments. Sometimes certain outfits are mandatory in some sport facilities or are at least expected. The use of the facility can be mixed, leaving less opportunities for gender-specific activities for example. Or facilities can be too crowded and loud for people who are coping with acculturative stress and anxiety.

***“If there would be rules preventing people to wear a certain kind of footwear for sports inside the community hall then there would be a great deal of people not being able to take part in the sport activities.”***

Some stakeholders mention issues related to care as barriers, finding someone to take care of their children while participating in sport for example.

The stakeholder analysis also revealed barriers that to some stakeholders are facilitators to participation and vice versa. Some stakeholders for example, mention one should not be too strict on matters like attire or uniforms. They are costly, could feel inappropriate or awkward. Or that the rules of the club are important, but that they can become a barrier when they interfere with people's enjoyment or the group dynamic. Other stakeholders suggest the opposite. They point out that having the same attire promotes identification as a team or that a stricter emphasis on the rules installs equality and avoids conflicts. These issues point to the culture within a sports organisation, its customs, habits and rules, that can set barriers to participate.

Referring to the survey, we can summarise that two types of barriers dominate. The cost/affordability of participation is most often ranked as the most significant barrier, followed almost equally by issues relating to the accessibility of the sport offer. These aspects are wide-ranging relating to the venue, transport, time, sport technical requirements, combination with other compulsory activities and/or care for family. Compared to these barriers, the other barriers that are mentioned weigh less heavily.





During the interviews, we also asked both sport and non-sport organisations what, from their experience, **are the barriers they themselves, as organisations** have to overcome in order to include refugees. This had a lot to do with the way in which organisations have to deal with barriers refugees encountered.

Reflecting on the observation that there are few suitable sports on offer to refugees, the stakeholders indicate that organisational flexibility sometimes is a challenge. Several stakeholders say sport organisations don't always show a willingness to adapt their approach to better accommodate refugees. Some clubs, for example, focus exclusively on competition. They set high physical standards and expectations, limiting the influx only to very potential members. A focus on fun and play, group dynamics and personal well-being does not always fit the mission of clubs. Motivating them to make room for, or to experiment with, a different approach can be a challenge. But even when the motivation is there, challenges arise.

*“Mostly people want to help; it is when they can't help or don't know how to help that they step back or panic.”*

This limited willingness is not only due to the particular nature or mission of the sports organisation, other aspects also play a role. The competences and attitudes of staff and volunteers are often mentioned. In the survey the lack of knowledge about refugees and skills needed to accommodate refugees was ranked as the second most important challenge organisations have to overcome to include refugees. In this context, both sport and non-sport organisations most often mentions language and cultural barriers. Organisations feel incapable, unfamiliar or insecure at mediating these barriers or say they lack resources to do so. To tackle language and cultural barriers almost all stakeholders indicate the importance of 'foreign-language- friendly' and culturally sensitive staff and volunteers. Motivating staff and volunteers and finding opportunities to help them develop these skills are a challenge.

Apart from language and cultural barriers, sport organisations also feel ill-equipped to deal with possible mental health concerns of refugees, such as depression, anxiety, trauma or stress. Making trainers, coaches and other people involved receptive to these issues is sometimes a challenge. Most of them, staff and volunteers, just want to lead sport activities, without having to deal with these issues.

Apart from having staff and volunteers with these particular skillsets, the stakeholders say it is necessary to engage enough of them in order to accommodate and support refugees. Finding the right people or training them if necessary are important challenges organisation face. This is particularly the case when organisations start from scratch. Then, there are less networks available to recruit from or to instigate a knowledge transfer. In communities where refugees are already involved in various initiatives, stakeholder say it is much easier to overcome these challenges.

The need to engage enough staff and/or volunteers with particular skillsets, and the limited financial resources refugees can bring into an organisation themselves, put pressure on the budget. Almost all stakeholders mention there is a difficulty to safeguard sustainable financing. Apart from the scarce public funds becoming more limited and more demarcated, stakeholders state that funding is mostly project-based, flaring up when there is public outcry but do not continue once policy objectives or public opinions shift. Without supporting subsidies stakeholders say initiative are more likely to be discontinued. If this happens, refugees may come to distrust the motives of the originations that are involved and feel inclined not to participate.

Several stakeholders voice that it is challenging to introduce refugees to and familiarising them with the way sport is commonly organised and experienced in the arrival country. In the survey establishing and communicating a welcoming environment to refugees was ranked as the most important challenge organisations have to overcome to include refugees. This is a challenge for two reasons. First there is a lack of a mindset and mechanisms linking refugees to a sport offers, and secondly refugees are often unfamiliar to the culture within sport clubs, the democratic process by which they are governed and the expectations that come with it. Stakeholders particularly point out that refugees can have a different understanding of what it means to be a member of a sport club. This can range from noncommittal, coming and going when it suits, to unrealistic expectations, anticipating becoming the next top scorer for example. Most sport organisations expect further commitment of refugees, be it as a volunteer, in helping with logistics of organising sport or more social activities or becoming a coach or trainer. Transferring or mediating these expectations to refugees can be a challenge.

A move to competitive sport brings about a distinctive set of challenges. Several stakeholders mention difficulties when including refugees in official competitions. The sport organisation needs authorisation from several national governing bodies, one being in the country of origin of the particular refugee who wants to compete. Contacting organisations in areas of ongoing, or even past armed conflicts is difficult. When a refugee flees their country fearing persecution, this becomes an even more tricky and sensitive issue. Nevertheless, also on this issue stakeholders point to instances where organisations worked around these barriers. Flexibility does not always run up to the national governing bodies, but on the way up there are plenty of people who want to make things possible.



## 5.3 Benefits of collaborating

When collaborating, both organisations' aims and objectives have to coincide. It's all about achieving common goals by pooling and sharing resources. When it comes to pooling and sharing, differences actually become an asset when they are complementary. The assumption is that complementing each other is a key factor for success.

In the stakeholder analysis we wanted to find out how sport-organisations and non-sport organisations complement each other. During the interviews we asked both groups what, from their experience, the most important benefits of collaborating are. In short, why would they collaborate? Why is it important?

For the **sport organisations** consulted, the most immediate benefit in collaborating with non-sport organisations is to find or reach out to refugees. Also, in the survey, increased reach and access to refugees was ranked the second most important benefit for sport organisations in collaborating with non-sports organisations to target refugees. We learned that collaborations often start, but rarely end with this question. The stakeholders mention that for refugees it is difficult to decode and interpret the intentions and expectations of sport organisations. Sport organisations state that they have little to no knowledge of the living conditions of refugees, the cultural differences or their needs and expectations. To mediate these difficulties, sport organisations mention they are eager to lean on the expertise - and staff or volunteers - of non-sport organisations. It is therefore unsurprising that sport organisations ranked the complimentary network and knowledge of the non-sport organisation as the most important benefit in collaborating in order to offer more support to refugees.

**The non-sport organisations** consulted are confronted with the need to provide leisure and free time to refugees, but often lack the resources, capacity or mandate to organise sport activities themselves. Therefore, they look for sport organisations who are willing to accommodate or include refugees. Even when they could organise sport activities themselves, some non-sport organisations mention they prefer to collaborate with sport organisations. Several reasons were brought forward, most commonly the involvement of skilled coaches or trainers and the direct link sport organisations have with the local community. The first can guarantee better sport activities, the second more opportunities for societal inclusion of refugees.



*“As an organisation trying to work with refugees on all fronts you may end up moving around on the same spot, but when you collaborate with others you may move forward.”*

The survey confirmed the importance of collaboration with sport organisations in order to broader scope and effectiveness of service delivery to refugees (e.g. engagement with local communities...), ranking it as the second most important benefit. But more remarkably non-sport organisations ranked more positive public perception of refugees due to visibility of sport organisation and/or activity (role models, media...) as the most important benefit in collaboration.

Both sport and non-sport stakeholders stated that they have very different expert knowledge and sector specific networks. Because they are very different, it is easy to complement each other while collaborating. Pooling knowledge is most often mentioned by stakeholders. In most cases organisations state they could rely on people with supplementing skills for specific tasks. But stakeholders also state a lot of informal exchange between professionals or volunteers with very different skills and experiences would be beneficial.

Stakeholders seem to imply that collaboration challenges them to think, articulate and receive clarity about their competences. It can serve as a mirror, a way of gaining insight into their strengths and weaknesses. Collaboration is often experienced as of form of self-analysis, as learning by doing. When collaborating, both sport and non-sport organisations can expect to be forced in a mode of continuous learning, to go and grow beyond their comfort zones. Stakeholders state collaboration will trigger them to look at things from a new perspective and make improvements and enhancements. Collaboration, in this way, can push them to innovate.

*“When we collaborate, we both get ‘enriched’”*

Apart from pooling knowledge and learning from each other, very practical considerations prevailed. The stakeholders are quite direct about that. Most often they mention that they can draw from each other’s networks to engage volunteers, to gain access to facilities or to gather material. Some stakeholders also mention the collaboration makes it easier to complete the budget or convince financiers and governments to invest in their project.

Overall, the stakeholders acknowledge that collaborating can make the service delivery stronger, more effective and efficient. Stakeholders from both groups say collaboration can make staff and volunteers feel more confident knowing they can rely on each other. Sport organisations specifically mention that they will feel more reassured knowing they can refer refugees with specific questions to non-sport partner, knowing they will find the support they are looking for. Non-sport organisations state that they would feel empowered by the collaboration with sport organisations. They will feel supported in voicing and telling the stories of refugees and claim the collaboration with sport organisations will have more impact in changing the perception of refugees.

*“Collaboration brings the best of both worlds (together) in order to make it better for refugees and the community.”*

*“The organisations meet their goals, refugees have better activities, the community comes in contact with people with different backgrounds”*

## 5.4 Challenges foreseen in collaboration

Cross-sector collaboration is never easy. Even after agreeing on common objectives and feeling confident about complementing each other, it still requires overcoming traditional mindsets, getting people to take risks, to deal with other timescales, values and cultures, and building trust and equity between organisations.

In the stakeholder analysis we wanted to know what challenges sport-organisations and non-sport organisations foresee prior to engaging in collaboration. The assumption is that when you know what challenges to expect, they will be easier to anticipate and overcome.

Many stakeholders mention that finding an organisation to collaborate with is the first challenge. Several of the collaborations referred to during the interviews and project meetings were the result of a convergence of ideas among like-minded people. So, more accurately, finding the right person within an organisation to explore and develop the collaboration is the first challenge. This was foremost the case for sport organisations. In the survey finding the right person (and/or capacity) in the sport club to manage the collaboration was ranked the most important challenge. Non-sport organisations only ranked this on the third place. Stakeholders mention ambition and drive as decisive factors. Someone can be supportive to the aims and objective that are being presented, but what stakeholders look for is someone who is fully supported by the organisation and not just follows an idea from its own enthusiasm. Stakeholders say they want to be sure if the organisation they are collaborating with is evenly invested to pull it off.

Connecting with like-minded people from different professional sectors is often a very personal matter. It was mentioned that people studied together, had previous working relations, had mutual friends or interests, and so on, before they started collaborating. More often than not, finding the right person is a long and tedious process. None of the stakeholders mentioned initiatives specifically aimed at bringing sport and non-sport organisations together. Public policies or funding opportunities stimulating or facilitating collaboration between sport and non-sport organisations are not mentioned either.

Almost all stakeholders mention public resources directed to refugees are diminishing or are becoming more and more restricted. Especially non-sport organisations confirmed this in the survey. They ranked changing government policies and attitudes on migration as the most important challenge in establishing collaborations. On the other hand, sport organisations ranked this as the least important challenge. Non-sport stakeholders stress well-being rarely as a policy focus in the services that can be provided to asylum seekers. So there are very limited government stimuli to organise leisure activities in asylum centres. In regard to services delivered for refugees, the stakeholders say that the emphasis is on housing, schooling and work. Well-being in relation to leisure is rarely high on the agenda, making it hard to fit sport into the existing formats. Less than a quarter of stakeholders mention that governments have stimulating policies to help refugees to settle in a new community that include opportunities to sport. None of them mentions cross-sector collaboration as a criterion in those policies.

***“Policies are being implemented that are discouraging organisations and individuals who work with or help refugees.”***

Some stakeholders mention the lack of a cross-sector focus in government as a challenge to collaboration. Because governments commonly think and act in fixed policy domains. Organisations who are collaborating across policy domains could apply for funding to several departments or services. Sometimes this can be beneficial, but sometimes departments refer to each other and nobody ends up taking responsibility. Two stakeholders reported instances where different city services were each supporting similar, but separate initiatives that were targeting the same group at the same time.

Some stakeholders mention they struggle to fit their project into different policy aims and funding requirements. They relate this to fixed ideas politicians and civil servants have on the kinds of services organisations are supposed to deliver and how they should be done. Sport organisations are not commonly expected to relate participation of refugees to well-being or integration, which may make certain aspects of a funding application appear strange or irrelevant. Just like non-sport organisations are not expected to run, for example, a football club. Some stakeholders fear cross-sector collaboration will result in more time needed to convince governments or more paperwork when applying for funding.

***“On the ground you work transversal-horizontally across different policy domains, while the people that are in political office may understand the need to work that way. That’s one. But even if you convince them you still have a Kafkaesque bureaucracy that comes from years of working within their own structures and may not know what their neighbour (other department) is doing in another domain.”***

Paperwork and red tape are also mentioned by smaller stakeholders who expect to collaborate with bigger ones. Differences in scale, i.e. the number of employees, is important. When the difference is too big, stakeholders foresee challenges in establishing a trust relation, decisions could take longer to make or flexibility can diminish. Differences in financial resources are also mentioned. Organisations with a larger budget tend to have more power in the decision process. Some stakeholders express challenges on this subject.

Some stakeholders mention that challenges between organisations mostly become clearer when the collaboration becomes concrete and practical, when plans are being implemented. Then, organisations are confronted with differences in mindsets, values and organisational cultures while being pressed to make decisions. All stakeholders state that the needs and expectations of refugees should be put before the ones of organisations. But even then, stakeholders say, differences in perspectives and approaches are not easily overcome. They say it takes time to get to know these differences, and even more time to overcome them.

In order to include refugees, sport organisations, for example, had to reduce or abandon their emphasis on competition or technical aspects of sport. These changes are not self-evident for organisations that are mainly running on volunteers. Coaches and trainers are not accustomed, some of them are not willing or are just not skilled for it. Stakeholders foresee that collaboration often involves establishing common ground, maybe persuading someone to change practices, to take another turn or learn and experiment with something new. Getting people to learn, to try and adapt is only possible if there is mutual trust and a to-way drive. Stakeholders say safeguarding enough time to bring this process to its full potential is challenging. Especially for smaller organisations or those who rely mainly on volunteers.

Apart from time, stakeholders mention the importance of transparency and communications to overcome these challenges. Most of them state it is impossible to anticipate all differences in mindsets, values and cultures. They say it will be important to plan a lot of working meetings preceding and during the collaboration. And to include everybody who is involved, also refugees, in these meetings. They say organisations will have to evaluate constantly, include everybody in the evaluation process and should not hesitate to adjust their approach. Most stakeholders seem to imply that they would prefer a more informal, horizontal working relationship with each other in order to facilitate this.

When collaborating, the work should be divided equally and efficiently between those with the time and the expertise to handle specific tasks. All stakeholders acknowledge this ambition in one way or another. But all of them put a lot of emphasis on establishing clear working arrangements. Apart from organisational aspects, establishing clear roles and responsibilities are most mentioned, often related to issues of leadership. Because of the importance stakeholders attached to it, we dare to name these issues as challenges.





Some stakeholders say a thorough action plan is needed from the start. Others say there should be guidelines to fall back on, but flexibility should prevail. These different approaches depend on organisational culture and leadership. But some stakeholders point out that policy requirements and government obligations also play some part in it. Some organisations have to report, for example, on the number of activities and participants to answer for funding. When this is the case, the plan must be implemented as it was approved. This will leave little room for flexibility. This can be challenging.

When we start from the survey, we can summarise that non-sport organisations are mainly concerned about the limited capacity of sports organisations (finances, volunteers, knowledge...) and that sport organisations see challenges in managing differences in visions, mission and approaches related to their limited understanding of the situation of refugees. We dare to describe the common challenge as follows: linking expectations to capacity and building mutual trust in order to arrive at a common approach.

Most striking to us was that several stakeholders mention the changing public perceptions of refugees and migrants, and often the role politicians and the media play in shaping that perception, as a challenge in establishing collaborations. They mention refugees are being problematised more and more and that discussions about asylum and integration are becoming more and more polarised. Some stakeholders state this makes not only governments reluctant to direct resources to refugees. Some stakeholders mention sport-organisations sometime hesitate or decline to engage on this topic because of these problematised and polarised views. They prefer to ignore the topic, so to avoid heated discussion and possible discontent among members, staff, fans or sponsors. This could also be a reason why sport organisations state it is challenging to find the right person in the club to manage a collaboration targeting refugees.

## 5.5 What to aim for

Overly complex projects that often lie out of your comfort zone can feel overwhelming and curb your motivation. When analysing the stakeholder interviews, we tried to make a synthesis of the different approaches the stakeholders rolled out. In this way we try to clarify what you have to aim for if you want to partner up to include refugees.

During the stakeholder interviews, we asked both sport and non-sport organisations what, in their experience, is the most conducive environment to include refugees.

When developing a suitable sport offer, all stakeholders agree the sport offer has to focus on fun and play. Group dynamics and personal well-being are more important than sport technical or tactical skills and competition. The entry level has to be wide and low, aiming to include people that are not that physically fit yet. The sport offer should also include more social orientated activities, eating together, for example, or mini- tournaments with invited guests, a quiz or party.

In order to motivate refugees, organisations will have to make sure they know what their needs are and find out how they can meet them. The best way to do this is to open a dialogue and involve refugees in the development of the plans. Organisations should do this with some prior knowledge of the often-precarious contexts refugees live in and take those particularities into account.

Also in this context, stakeholders highlight the importance of refugees being invited to sport and of feeling welcomed when engaging in a sports offer. The stakeholders say it is important to express understanding of the precarious situation of refugees and convince them that, nevertheless, sport still can be something for them. They say it is necessary to discuss the benefits of sport participation with refugees to affirm motivation and to bring focus and ownership in the sport offer.

They also say, the sport offer should preferably be free of charge for refugees, or at least at a minimum cost. They also stress there are always 'hidden' costs involved that both refugees and organisers will have to consider. The stakeholders recommend organising your sport offer in spaces and facilities that are accessible and convenient for refugees. They refer to limiting travel distance, but also to the safety and familiarity of the location. Here, too, feeling welcomed is important.

They stress that organisations should never assume that the sport offer is self-evident for most refugees. To overcome unfamiliarity with the culture within the sport organisations and expectations that come with membership, they say open and transparent communication is essential and that a dialogue with refugees about these aspects should start from the beginning of a project.

To start this dialogue and in order to keep it going, the stakeholders say it is pivotal to have the right person running the sport offer. Most stakeholders foresee a combination of people with predominantly sport related skills and people with primarily more social, non-sport specific skill. Some stakeholders state the most effective language and culturally sensitive staff are people with a refugee or migrant background. They also indicate you will need to engage enough staff and/or volunteers to accommodate refugees.

What was most often emphasised by all stakeholders is to establish trust-based relationship. They all aim to establish trust between refugees, (club)members from the local community and everyone involved in organising the sport offer. i.e. coaches, trainers, staff or volunteers. Trust is an inherent component of interpersonal relationships. From all stakeholder consultations it is difficult to pinpoint how this trust is built up. It has to do with what activities are offered, how they are offered and who supervises them.

When talking about the skills and attitudes of the people running the sports offer, stakeholders hint at underlying principles. Equality and mutual respect are principles that are most often mentioned. At

various times, all stakeholders say it is essential to understand the situation refugees are dealing with, but not to approach them as a charity case. This points to a commitment to the fate of refugees, to improve their well-being in a sense of shared responsibility to a common future. This could be based on principles organisations name in their mission statement and strive for. But generally, they are more often put forward and made concrete by the people who are committed to these organisations.

The emphasis stakeholders put on communication and dialogue, or on a sport offer that focuses on well-being and group dynamics points to an organisational culture that is more people-centred, where the environment enables people to find meaning in what they do. In these kinds of organisations, the results more commonly arise out of the process rather than the actual product itself i.e. the sport offer. With this, we dare to claim that human resources (trainers, coaches, staff, volunteers, etc.) are the truly unique and sustainable strength in establishing this trust relationship.

Some stakeholders mention the importance of leadership when successfully including refugees. They mention practical and organisational benefits from clear leadership. In several cases that were presented, a personal drive is mentioned, a commitment to communicate what the organisation stands for and wants to accomplish. The importance of this, more visionary role of leadership was mentioned in order to preserve or establish organisational purpose. But it can also point to more people-centred leadership.

Most stakeholders say that a top down approach will not work and that results come through the people who are involved. They tend to imply that more people-centred culture and leadership facilitates a can-do attitude. It points to staff and volunteers who are responsible and empowered to represent the organisation, who are confident and willing to deal with challenges or new tasks, rather than complaining or giving up.

This attitude also points to organisational flexibility. Most stakeholders acknowledge that managing unfamiliarity and differences in expectations always is a two-way process. So you have to be prepared to experiment with other approaches and change existing ones. This implies an organisational culture that welcomes new perspective, in which learning is central and that celebrates improvements and enhancements.

What we certainly noticed during the interviews was a sincere commitment to the fate and well-being of refugees. In their respectful approach, stakeholders put the interests of refugees first. In doing so, they were prepared to open up the framework of their organisation. However, some stakeholders from both groups indicated that demarcation is important. They do not want to fill the gaps that arise from the withdrawal of public services to refugees. This was also mentioned during a project meeting, where stakeholders concluded organisations shouldn't aim to do each other's work, they should complement each other and learn from each other in order to do what they do even better. The stakeholders say that organisations should aim at becoming confident to include refugees, but they also say they want to be sure that there are adequate services to which they can refer refugees.

The willingness of stakeholders to open up the frameworks of their organisation certainly has to do with an organisational culture and leadership that puts people first. Organisations have to be able to count on people who are intrinsically motivated to work with refugees. This intrinsic motivation is best strengthened through working in an inclusive way and tackling the challenges that come with it head-on. Stakeholders tend to imply that working inclusively is learning by doing. Doing it precedes learning it.



## 6. Guidelines for good practice

We were deeply inspired by the talks with the stakeholders and the various case studies that were presented during the project meetings. In this section we tried to summarise all the good advice that we captured and relate it to the aim of this report. When the implementation partners reflect on these guidelines to carry out their collaborative pilot project, their undertaking will certainly become a good practice. Because MOVE Beyond aims to contribute to mainstreaming the use of sport for inclusion of refugees, we also include guidelines for policymakers.

### Prior to collaborating

1. Actively communicate what your organisation stands for and wants to accomplish. Empower staff and volunteers to represent the organisation and motivate them to network across sectoral divides. The most fruitful collaborations are the result of a convergence of ideas of like-minded people. The more opportunities you create to meet like-minded people, the better.
2. Before embarking on any form of collaboration, make time to get to know different possible partners. Visit each other, also outside formal meetings. Talk about more than what you want to accomplish. Take part in each other's activities. Get to know each other's employees and volunteers. Reflect together on past experiences. Identify similarities and differences.
3. Bring together very different people to explore how things could be accomplished. Present different options or ways of working to everyone involved, including refugees. Gather feedback and list criteria that indicate when a certain option can be described as a success. Identify resources, knowledge and skills needed for different options. This will give you a sense of what to look for in a collaboration.

### When embarking in a collaboration

1. Explore with your partners the desired outcomes of the collaboration on different levels, for refugees, for the organisations involved and for the community at large. Identify similarities and differences and prioritise them according to the aims and objectives of each organisation involved. When desired outcomes largely coincide, there will be enough common ground in order to take differences into account.
2. Explore with your partners different options of how these outcomes can be accomplished and decide together on the best one. Include refugees in the process and put their interests first. It is of the utmost importance to involve refugees as equal stakeholders and not approach them as victims or a charity case.
3. Jointly define criteria that indicate when your approach will be successful. Include the no-go areas and the non-negotiables. Define clear outputs and identify the resources that will be needed to implement them to become that success. Focus on the most concrete and practical aspects but also on the knowledge and skills needed. Explore how partners can supplement each other in an equal way.
4. Make plans together. Take into account differences in organisational size, resources and culture. Aim to divide the work equally and efficiently between those with the time and the expertise to handle specific tasks. Put plans on paper, at great detail or at minimum in guidelines to go back to, whatever works best. Make sure they are fully supported by the management of all organisations involved.



### When you implement plans together

1. Establish who is responsible for what. Do so in a way that people are empowered to take on responsibilities. Let them decide on the best way to handle specific tasks. Avoid a top-down approach and minimise the distance between volunteers, activity leaders and the management. Identify each person's strengths and use their strengths to benefit the project, appreciate them and remunerate them correctly.
2. Meet regularly. You share more than a common goal and plan. It is not enough to just inform each other on the progress. Introduce each other to contacts in your separate networks so new ones can develop. Get people to meet each other in order to give and receive feedback. Act on feedback and learn from each other. Don't hesitate to change plans or switch to a better approach. Try new things.
3. Keep realistic expectations. If it doesn't go the way it should, then it has to go the way it does. Remember that the process often determines the outcomes more than the actual output. So, always keep the bigger picture in sight. Your biggest strength and assets are the trainers, coaches, staff and volunteers. Make sure you can engage enough of them and follow their lead.

### When you shape the sports offer

1. Have the right people running the activities. Combine people who have different skillsets but the same commitment toward refugees. They should be familiar with the basic do's and don'ts and conscious of cultural differences. Make sure they are open and willing to make time to learn from each other and from refugees, so that their sensitivity toward refugees can grow.
2. Go for an appreciative and welcoming approach, not a different one. Be authentic and communicate openly and directly about what is going on and what is expected. Focus on establishing a good group dynamic and having fun. Make it easy for refugees to give feedback and act on it. Enable them to take ownership by dividing tasks and responsibilities.
3. Appoint a designated person who keeps an overview and can analyse the dynamics from a certain distance. Probably that person will see and identify things that activity leaders don't. As a facilitator, this person can improve the dynamics between organisations as well as with the refugees.
4. Include community building activities. Both bonding and bridging. Everyone wants to give something back to their community, especially when it's fun and appreciated. Compliment each other and celebrate progress. Make yourself visible and tell a positive story. In this way you motivate people to sport, go against prejudices and convince more sponsors.



## When you're a policy maker

1. Claim the power of sport. Advocate its broad benefits and include sport in asylum and integration policies or services. Stimulate cross-sector collaboration by including collaboration as a criterion for a subsidy. Safeguard sustainable funding. No blank cheques, but the guarantee that organisations can grow in the ambitions they share with policymakers. Show commitment to organisations that are willing to make a difference.
2. Consider the well-being of refugees. You don't want to be in their shoes. What seems trivial, such as the opportunity to play sports, can open up a world of opportunities to them. Initiate efforts aimed at connecting asylum and integration services to sport organisations and services so they can provide and link refugees to sport.
3. Reward organisations and clubs that do well in including refugees. They are often small and struggling. Buy into their knowledge. Don't hesitate to scale up good practices. Use it as a way to instigate more structural changes in various policy domains. Go against vested interests and customs to make more space for inclusive organisations and services.
4. Change the public perception of refugees and migrants. Choose a narrative of gratitude and hope. Focus on the opportunities that can arise. Advocate a shared responsibility to a common future, even when people can only stay temporarily. Use the popularity and positive attitudes toward sport to illustrate that narrative.



