**TEMPLATE FOR REPORTING ON RECENT INITIATIVES ON SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE**

***More than a Game – The UNHCR Sport Strategy (2022-2026)***

***Task:*** *Provide a summary of the initiative, including a brief overview, proposed/actual outcomes and an assessment of any lessons learned and the way forward.*

***Timeframe:*** *Please only include initiatives that fall within the reporting timeframe of January 2022 – February 2024*

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| **Please provide more details on each initiative including items below:** | | |
| **Objective(s):**  The objectives of the UNHCR Sport Strategy “More than a Game” are fivefold:   1. The communities UNHCR serves are better included in protective and developmental sport activities without any discrimination (Sport and play-based programming). 2. Refugees with elite talent can fulfil their potential and access opportunities for complementary pathways through sport (Elite support). 3. There is an increase in new communications and  advocacy opportunities through engaging sport  partners and media, and through sport events (Communications and advocacy). 4. Sport is utilized to improve diplomatic, social and  political relations in support of the people UNHCR  serves (Sport diplomacy). 5. The sport ecosystem is leveraged to raise funds and other resources for sport, recreation, humanitarian and other programming (Resource mobilization). | *Please indicate which, if any, of the following fall among the main objectives of the initiative:* | |
| * Ensuring no one is left behind (advancing empowerment, inclusiveness and equality through sport) | * Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity |
| * Leveraging sports events to promote action to combat climate change, advance peace and/or sustainable development | * Conflict prevention/peace building |
| * Research development, data collection and/or data dissemination | * Safely harnessing sport for sustainable development, peace and wellbeing in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, including through the use of technology |
| * Reinforce the 2030 Agenda and eradicate poverty in times of multiple crises, leading to the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient, and innovative solutions | * Safeguarding sport from corruption and crime |
| * Strengthened global framework on sport for development and peace (Sport for Protection) | * Other (please specify) |
| **Situation** | *What is the challenge or problem that the initiative aims to address?*  At the end of 2022, **108.4 million people** worldwide were forcibly displaced as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations and events seriously disturbing public order. This represents an increase of 19 million people compared to the end of 2021 – more than the populations of Ecuador, the Netherlands (Kingdom of the) or Somalia. It is also the largest ever increase between years according to UNHCR’s statistics on forced displacement.  More than 1 in every 74 people on Earth has been forced to flee.  People forced to flee face various challenges resulting from their forced displacement, including:   * **Protection** – People forced to flee are often deprived of their fundamental human rights and experience diverse forms of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect. * **Education** - Close to half of all refugee children – 48 per cent – remain out of school. Only 7% of refugees have access to higher education, which is far below the global average higher education enrollment among non-refugees, which stands at more than 40 per cent. * **Health** - Many refugees face tremendous obstacles in meeting their health needs. The health needs of refugees depend on many factors: pre-existing conditions and the state of healthcare in their country before fleeing, the length and conditions of their displacement and their access to health, including MHPSS, services in their host country. * **Livelihoods** – Most refugees have no access to financial services, and many do not have the right to work and are excluded from social protection systems.   In terms of access to safe sport, people forced to flee are often excluded from local, national sport systems and do not have access to adequate sport facilities, programmes, equipment and training.  UNHCR’s Sport Strategy, More than a Game, seeks to contribute to addressing the various challenges described above by leveraging the sport ecosystem to improve the wellbeing and opportunities for people forced to flee and host communities through sport. | |
| **Implementation mechanisms:** | *What are the means/processes of implementation of the initiative?*  At the global level, the implementation of More than a Game is supported by a multifunctional team representing various aspects of UNHCR’s work, including partnership and coordination, communications, and private sector partnerships. Moreover, UNHCR’s education programme is represented within the multifunctional sport team given the close link between sport and education. Further links are being explored with other technical teams, including health, livelihoods and protection.  At the operational level, since the launch of More than a Game in November 2022, the UNHCR Sport Coordination Team in Geneva has been supporting 17 Country Operations to develop thinking on how the sport ecosystem could be leveraged in those countries to contribute to UNHCR operational objectives. These sport priority countries have also developed multiyear sport for protection project concept notes. Throughout 2024, the concept notes will be matched with donors, mostly from the sport ecosystem, who have expressed interest in supporting refugees and host communities through sport and play-based programming.  Sport for protection projects are implemented by UNHCR country operations through implementing partners. Wherever possible, sport for protection projects are supported by specialized organizations who provide technical guidance and expertise on sport and play-based programming in displacement settings.    *What are the main deliverables/activities involved?*  The roll out of More than a Game encompasses a wide range of activities, all of which are centered around partnerships.  Key actions of More than a Game include, to:   * Identify and maintain partnerships that support roll-out at the global, regional and national levels. * Initiate projects and programmes with sport, humanitarian and development partners that utilize the added value of sport and build evidence of what works. * Communicate about displacement and sport to build greater awareness of refugee issues. * Use the platform that sport provides to bring refugee issues to new audiences and forums. * Identify new financial and other resources for sport and humanitarian initiatives. * Monitor, evaluate, learn and adapt.   *What is the time frame of implementation?*  The UNHCR Sport Strategy covers the period of 2022 to 2026. | |
| **Target Audience(s):** | *Who are the beneficiaries of the proposed/implemented initiative?*  The primary beneficiaries of More than a Game are people forced to flee conflict and persecution as well as those denied a nationality. This includes refugees, asylum seekers, stateless people, internally displaced persons, and returnees. Sport and play-based programmes often target children and young people; however, they are rooted in a community-based protection approach which includes host communities. As such, they also target adults and, in some cases, include an intergenerational dialogue component to engage elderly populations in and through sport. | |
| **Partners/Funding:** | *Who are the main organizations/entities involved in the initiative and what are their roles?*  UNHCR works closely with the sport ecosystem to implement More than a Game. Sport is an ecosystem that extends from the local to the global. Recognizing its reach is central to strategically engaging and developing opportunities with sport actors. This heterogeneous and complex ecosystem is made up of a multitude of stakeholders, ranging from grass-roots and community-level associations to professional clubs and teams, from local sport teams to international sport governing bodies, from school tournaments to mega sporting events, and from niche sport equipment producers to global brands and media outlets.  Key partnerships at the global level include FIFA, UEFA, Adidas, FC Barcelona, and the International Olympic Committee. These partnerships are multifaceted and collectively contribute to the five strategic objectives of More than a Game. Throughout 2024 and 2025, new sport partnerships will be established with a specific focus on regional partnerships.  *What are the main sources of funding of the initiative?*  Most of the resource mobilized in support of More than a Game come from the sport ecosystem through foundations and the private sector. | |

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| **SDG Alignment:** | To what SDG goal/target/indicator is this initiative targeted?  More than a Game contributes to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, and is closely aligned with the following goals:   * SDG 3 – Good health and wellbeing * SDG 4 – Quality education * SDG 5 – Gender equality * SDG 8 – Decent work and economic growth * SDG 10 – Reduced inequalities * SDG 16 – Peace, justice and strong institutions * SDG 17 – Partnerships for the goals   Please indicate any other national or internationally agreed goals/commitments to which this initiative is aligned.  Sport was integrated into UNHCR doctrine in 2018 with the adoption of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) by  member States. Paragraph 44 “recognizes the important role that sports [...] can play in social development, inclusion, cohesion, and well-being, particularly for refugee children (both boys and girls), adolescents and youth”. More than a Game outlines how sport can, across five interlinked areas, contribute to the GCR objectives and the High Commissioner’s Strategic Directions. Furthermore, the strategy is aligned with internal strategies and frameworks covering education, health, gender-based violence and child protection as well as internal results-based planning instruments, to ensure internal coherence.  The Multistakeholder Pledge on Sport for Inclusion and Protection, which was announced at the second edition of the Global Refugee Forum in December 2023 by the Sport for Refugees Coalition, includes five areas of commitment which are aligned with the five strategic objectives of More than a Game. The five areas of the Joint Pledge on Sport are:   1. Promote an enabling environment, including policy, that delivers access to safe sport. 2. Promote and provide inclusive, safe, sport and play-based initiatives. 3. Promote and provide opportunities for enhanced skills and pathway in and through sport. 4. Use targeted communication, evidence and advocacy. 5. Strengthen partnerships and coordination efforts.   The Joint Pledge on Sport mobilized over 140 commitments from member states, civil society and the private sector.  The International Olympic Committee Agenda 2020+5 outlines how the IOC and the Olympic Movement will engage globally using sports partnerships to contribute to the SDGs. Consisting of 15 recommendations, it builds on the results  of the Olympic Agenda 2020 and acts as the roadmap for the next five years. It also sets out how the IOC, through stronger collaboration with United Nations bodies and through sport partnerships, will influence global social policy  change and resource allocation and initiate social development. Recommendation 11 describes how it will strengthen its support to refugees and populations affected by displacement.  The Union of European Football Associations Football Sustainability Strategy 2030, Strength Through Unity, outlines UEFA’s long-term commitment to inspire, activate and accelerate collective action on respect for human rights and the environment within the context of European football. The refugee pillar of the strategy describes how UEFA can help refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced people to remain physically and mentally healthy and become part of their host community through the power of football. |
| **Alignment with global frameworks:** | *How does this initiative align with/contribute to the objectives of the* [*Kazan Action Plan*](https://en.unesco.org/mineps6/kazan-action-plan)*,* [*WHO Global Action Plan on Physical Activity*](https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/272722/9789241514187-eng.pdf) *or other related internationally agreed frameworks on sport and/or physical activity?*  More than a Game contributes to the first action point of the Kazan Action Plan, which is to elaborate an advocacy tool presenting evidence-based arguments for investments in physical education, physical activity and sport. Monitoring data from sport and play-based programmes implemented through the roll out of More than a Game will provide lessons learned and promising practices that could be used to formulate evidence-based arguments for investing in sport in displacement settings.  More than a Game could conceivably contribute to each of the four strategic objectives of the WHO Global Action Plan. However, it is most closely aligned with the third strategic objective on creating active people, particularly Action 3.5: Strengthen the development and implementation of programmes and services, across various community settings, to engage with, and increase the opportunities for, physical activity in the least active groups, as identified by each country, such as girls, women, older adults, rural and indigenous communities, and vulnerable or marginalized populations, embracing positive contributions by all people. Sport and play-based programmes implemented by UNHCR and implementing partners specifically target marginalized populations, including girls, women, older adults, rural and indigenous communities, and are guided by a community-based protection approach. |
| **Alignment with United Nations Action Plan on SDP:** | *Which of the four thematic areas of the* [*UN Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace*](https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2018/06/14.pdf) *is this initiative designed to align?*  More than a Game is designed to align with the third thematic area of the UN Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace: Resource Mobilization, programming and implementation.  *To which action area(s) of the Plan is this initiative designed to contribute?*  Action 3a: Enhance and secure sustainable funding mechanisms and investment and resource allocation to sport for development and peace, including multi-stakeholder arrangements and different sectors at all levels. More than a Game provides the humanitarian sector with a strategy on engaging with the sport ecosystem to leverage resources on behalf of people forced to flee and host communities.  Action 3c: Integrate relevant thematic areas and crosscutting issues in sport for development and peace programmes, including the allocation of dedicated resources. More than a Game is guided by the principle of inclusion (age, gender and diversity) and a humans-rights approach. |
| **Outcomes:** | *What are the expected/actual outcomes of the initiative?*  The expected outcomes and long-term outcomes of the successful implementation of More than a Game are highlighted in the strategy’s global theory of change: |
| **Mechanism for monitoring and evaluating implementation:** | *What are the mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the implementation, outcomes and impact of the initiative?*  More than a Game is monitored and supported by the UNHCR Sport Coordination Team in Geneva and sport focal points at UNHCR regional bureaus and within sport priority country operations. Sport and play-based programmes resulting from More than a Game are designed and monitored according to a theory of change model and are informed by participatory needs assessments. Sport and play-based programmes are often implemented and monitored through implementing partners.  *What specific monitoring and evaluation tools are involved?*  Sport and play-based programmes implemented through More than a Game are guided by an evidence-based results framework that is articulated around three outcomes: Social inclusion, social cohesion, and psychosocial wellbeing. Monitoring tools are developed on a project-by-project basis with the support of implementing partners in collaboration with the UNHCR Sport Coordination Team in Geneva. |
| **Challenges/Lessons learned** | *What have been/were the main challenges to implementation?*  **Budget cuts and underfunding of humanitarian responses**. Sport is not prioritized in humanitarian responses and is further deprioritized in a climate of budget cuts and underfunding of humanitarian programmes. When lifesaving services are not adequately funded at the operational level, it is difficult to justify allocating resources to sport.  **Short-term funding cycles**. Donors supporting sport and play-based programmes often want to fund for single or two-year periods. However, Project evaluations and experiences in the field of sport for development and peace point to the need for long term investment, which is consistent with evaluations and recommendations of interventions in the fields of development, humanitarian aid, and peacebuilding.  *What lessons learned have been/can be utilized in the planning of future initiatives?*  In 2022, UNHCR published an evaluation of two case studies of UNHCR/IOC programming in Rwanda and Mexico to contribute to the limited knowledge of the sport and humanitarian sectors regarding sport-based interventions for the protection of young people in refugee situations. The evaluation report includes lessons learned related to safeguarding, gender equality, social inclusion, partnerships, MEL, resource planning and mobilization, coaches as agents of change, and capacity development. The report can be found here: [EVO/2022/12 Evaluation on the Relevance and Effectiveness of Sport Programming for Refugee Inclusion and Protection | UNHCR US](https://www.unhcr.org/us/media/evo-2022-12-evaluation-relevance-and-effectiveness-sport-programming-refugee-inclusion-and) |