



Report

Workshop

Volunteering and Strengthening Youth Network in Jordan

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Cross Cultures

## Introduction

In Cross Cultures regional programme: Caravans – Fun Sport for Civic Engagement (Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia) supported by Danish Arab Partnership Programme, youth leadership training and development plays a prominent role. The youth leadership training follows the basic didactic method of Cross Cultures with emphasis on the active exploration of the theme by the youth themselves rather than being lectured and instructed. The adaptive learning and action-learning approach of Cross Cultures is found in annex.

As a closing of the first 2 year cycle (2018-2019) for the 30 lead coaches in Jordan, a workshop in volunteering and strengthening the youth network in Jordan was held, which this report gives a brief overview of.

Cross Cultures Jordan has a very strong voluntary youth network and many committed and engaged and well trained volunteer coaches. Cross Cultures have trained coaches since the start in 2006.

With the DAPP programme a new intake of 20 youth coaches for a two year youth leadership training cycle was made possible.

Now, There are 6 regional Coaches, each supported by six coaches, which in turn each has 12 youth coach assistants. Nationally in Jordan there is a network of 300 voluntary Coaches. This is the strongest asset of the programme itself. The Young Volunteers have proven their hands-on leadership experience through the organization of the planned Day to Day training, Open Fun Football Schools, Festivals and Caravans. During 2018-2019 this amounted to

During 2019 the young voluntary coaches have also documented their capacity to lead and execute sports activities, while engaging in multiple stakeholder relations with parents, schools, community police, Ministry of Sports etc. For example, organising an Open Fun Football School Festival as in Ramtha takes a lot of planning, organization and negotiation.

On this background the groups discussed the journey of a young volunteer in Cross Cultures and also if there are other types of tasks than those related to the sport itself.

### The journey of a volunteer in Cross Cultures Jordan

In groups the coaches discussed the typical journey of a volunteer. Qasem Al -Daoud from Ramtha took the role as volunteer, knocking on the door of Cross Cultures Jordan, expressing his interest to be volunteer and then the groups were to map his journey (with the strengths and weaknesses that exists)

- Mobilisation and recruitment of Volunteers – how?
- Introduction, preparation and training – how and by whom?
- Which volunteer tasks/activities in Cross Cultures Jordan ?
- Which task/activities fit which volunteer? .....
- Delegation of Responsibilities of Coaches and who to refer to?
- Appreciation of the volunteers – HOW?
- Harvesting the lessons of volunteers – how? When?
- When the volunteer has left Cross Cultures Jordan, what then?
- Stimulating the network culture among volunteers – how?



The group work also discussed the many tasks that the volunteer coaches perform:

- Organising the coach team
- Contact with and agreement with the School
- Contact and agreement with the Parents
- Contact and agreement with the owner of the private pitch or youth house
- Organisation of safe transport of children
- Contact to the local community police
- Organisation of the coach team and transport of the coach team
- Preparing the pitch and developing the schedule of games and feed back sessions among the 100 children
- Transporting of equipment
- Contact to local sponsors for donations in kind in terms of food and drinks
- Contact to local media and organizing posting on facebook etc.
- Debriefing within the Coach Team



Children attending a feed-back session at the Sports Festival in Ramtha organized by 6 Cross Cultures voluntary youth coaches.

The discussing concluded that motivation and commitment among the youth coaches is key and that the mission and values, organizational culture and trust of Cross Cultures is very important to the coaches. The discussions also revealed that the volunteer journey could be improved and that other tasks can be identified. I.e. there is a professor that would like to be volunteer- what tasks could he be occupied with? The question of appreciation of the volunteers was also highlighted as very important. At the same time the young volunteers shared that they - by being volunteer - earned a lot of experience, good moments with children, good networking with other young, good standing and reputation in the community, self confidence, better employability etc. which in itself is of great value. But the recognition and appreciation from Cross Cultures, from the MOY and from parents and not least from the children is extremely important for motivation and energy.

Discussing what happens when the youth leave the voluntary engagement in Cross Cultures the coaches produced a big banner with the message –“ Once in Cross Cultures Jordan we always remain connected – we do not leave” So even if they move, get married, get a job, they have stayed engaged in the manner possible – if not on-going then ad-hoc for larger

festivals, etc. This is the case for Coaches, but not so for the coach assistants that are much younger, more on the move and preoccupied with their studies.

Most volunteers found that they could do much more if they had more access to facilities and more equipment. They see the negotiated access to the youth houses as really important for the future and they also would like to see an MOU with the Ministry of Education to pave the way for access to the pitches at the schools and also to ease the contact to schools.

Several examples were given that there is such a local demand that it can be difficult to respond to them all. Thus, the voluntary coach in Ramtha is sharing the positive experience that after a successful festival 5 schools had approached the lead coach asking for him and his coach team to organize Fun Sport Activities for the kids in the 5 schools. The Schools has promised to provide the school bus for all transport – of both children and coaches – and other in-kind support. Still, the coaches would want to have access to more equipment – so that one core set of equipment could be left at each school for day to day activities afterwards and so that all kids could be provided with a sports cap or a sports t-shirt that will signal that they are all together in sports even that some are very poorly dressed and some have to play football without shoes. This is just one example among many of how the activities are bourgeoning far beyond the planned number activities.

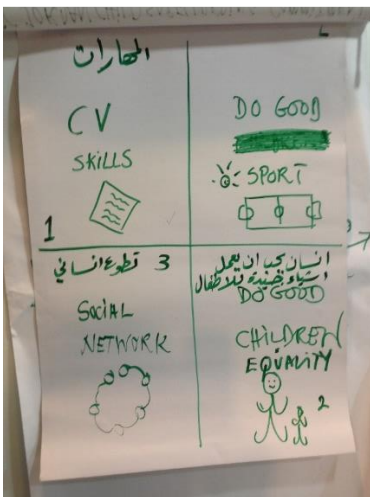
## Motivation and Drive

Following a brief introduction to Voluntarism, each coach filled in the voluntary questionnaire. The result of the questionnaire was that many felt they have many reasons for being part of Cross Cultures as mentioned above: Earning a lot of experience, good moments with children, good networking with other young, good standing and reputation in the community, self confidence, better employability etc .



The Cross Cultures youth coaches in Ma'an have developed a very strong teambuilding.

The overall picture of the motivation patterns were as follows:



- The youth volunteers clearly have the following motivations and reasons for engaging in Cross Cultures:
- 1) Gaining skills and leadership experience – also usefull for their C.V.
  - 2) Do good for children of Jordan and enhance the equality between children and between gender
  - 3) Be part of a meaningful social network of youth
  - 4) Enjoying the togetherness in sport and make sport accessible to all

The results confirm the success of the youth leadership training, which is exactly to build their skills, competences and leadership experience in practice, which also according to the youth is their main motivation and what they see as the main benefit of being a volunteer with Cross Cultures.

The reflections also highlighted the importance of tailoring the appreciation accordingly – i.e. write letters of recommendation, issue training certificates, or give recognition to the coach having been most successful in integrating girls and boys in Open Fun Football Schools.

## Activities and Results

During the two years the team of lead coaches and their assistants have achieved the following results:

- Capacity building of 365 young multiplayers (age between 14 and 30, 43% are female, 185 coaches and 180 coaches assistants)
- Implementation of 42 OFFS in 2017-2019 within 5 regions (Irbid, Ramtha, Dail, Karak and Aqaba)
- One region Ma'an was added to the 5 regions in the end of 2019 to become 6 regions
- Implementation of 13 workshops, 1 youth coach volunteer network workshop, 6 coaches seminars and 6 coaches assistants seminars across the 5 regions leading to
- 2,284 self-organized training sessions with approx., 49,487 show ups, 30% females in 2017-2019
- And in total (2017-2019) 49,487 children show ups in day to day activities
- Total (2017-2019) 6,406 children show ups in OFFS
- Total children show ups for 2017-2019 is 55,893 show up

## A Culture of Sport & Voluntarism being developed

A culture of sports for all are slowly developing in Jordan where sports traditionally are often restricted to the elite. The Danish Sport for All ('breddeidrætsmodel') is slowly inspiring the landscape of sports and the Memorandum of Understanding between Cross Cultures Jordan and the Ministry of Youth is significant in this regard.

The culture of voluntarism is slowly being strengthened in Jordan and the youth and other stakeholders already realise the tremendous trampoline for change it represents. Important community impact is also starting to transpire. Thus in Ramtha five local schools have approached the Cross Cultures Coach team for them to organise sports festivals for the school children and the local community policing is also starting to be present at the sport activities as they see the sport as a good opportunity to develop relations with children and parents.

Significant achievements have also been reached in the collaboration with and among local authorities. The involvement of the youth houses, the police, the municipalities, the schools and related sports associations have provided a new nexus in civil society and opened opportunities for new joint initiatives. Hereby, the Sports for All are also unifying different sectors of civil society that normally do not interact and new social fabrics are being developed at the same time as the youth are given an opportunity to express their visions for the future.

"We had some success stories among our coaches, some of them experienced a major impact on their personality, and they became more opened and had more boldness to face the crowd, other unemployed coaches were been noticed by their society from the activities in the neighborhood and from the facebook page and they had jobs according to that. Some of the kids were a little isolated and had troubles integrating with the others, and after a while they were all playing together and it had good effect on their personality  
And a big success for our coaches, they made several activities for autistic kids, deaf and dumb and for kids with down's syndrome. Now Cross Cultures in well known in Jordan".

## Strengthening the Youth Network

Clearly there is a strong network and sense of community among the youth coaches. They find that joint trainings as the seminar on Child Safeguarding is very instrumental for teambuilding because they get an opportunity to get to know each other outside the pitch and not only talk about sport but also on serious issues that concern them all both on a day to day level in the sports activities but also more generally as young citizens of Jordan. They also appreciated the opportunity to meet across the various regions in Jordan and many highlighted that the cross-regional exchanges with Tunisia and Morocco was also very useful in strengthening the network and providing new inspiration and energy and a sense of belonging. In fact the Caravan and Festival approach was inspiration from Morocco and many of the voluntary coaches have on their own initiative implemented Festivals in cooperation with local municipalities, youth houses or schools.

There is strong interest in the new independent status of Cross Cultures Jordan now registered nationally and for the youth network to be acting as the national platform for Cross Cultures Jordan. It was discussed to open up for membership of Cross Cultures Jordan, where by all the voluntary coaches could become members. They could pay their membership fee by voluntary work, where others can pay a small nominal fee. Hereby, Cross Cultures Jordan could strengthen the democratic dimensions inspired by the Danish Folkeoplysningslov (active members, a board, statutes, on-going activities etc). This could be an important organizational development goal for 2020.

### Other ideas

- Cooperation with other NGOs: The Travelling Birds Association invited CCPA to do a sports event with them
- Further cooperation with other DAPP partners – i.e. on International Youth Day
- A professor has approached Cross Cultures to be a volunteer- what kind of volunteer task can we give him? Could he be a member of Cross Cultures Jordan in the future?
- Good to work with Social Police – Community Police and make agreement with them
- Need for first aid training for coaches
- Need for seminar with expert on children in difficulties
- Holding Olympic games
- Five schools have approached the local coach for setting up OFFS activities in that region
- Take joint action on employment opportunities
- Develop income generating activities for the coaches - a concept for sports at large tourist hotels that would like to offer yoga, beach volley, team-football matches for their visitors.

