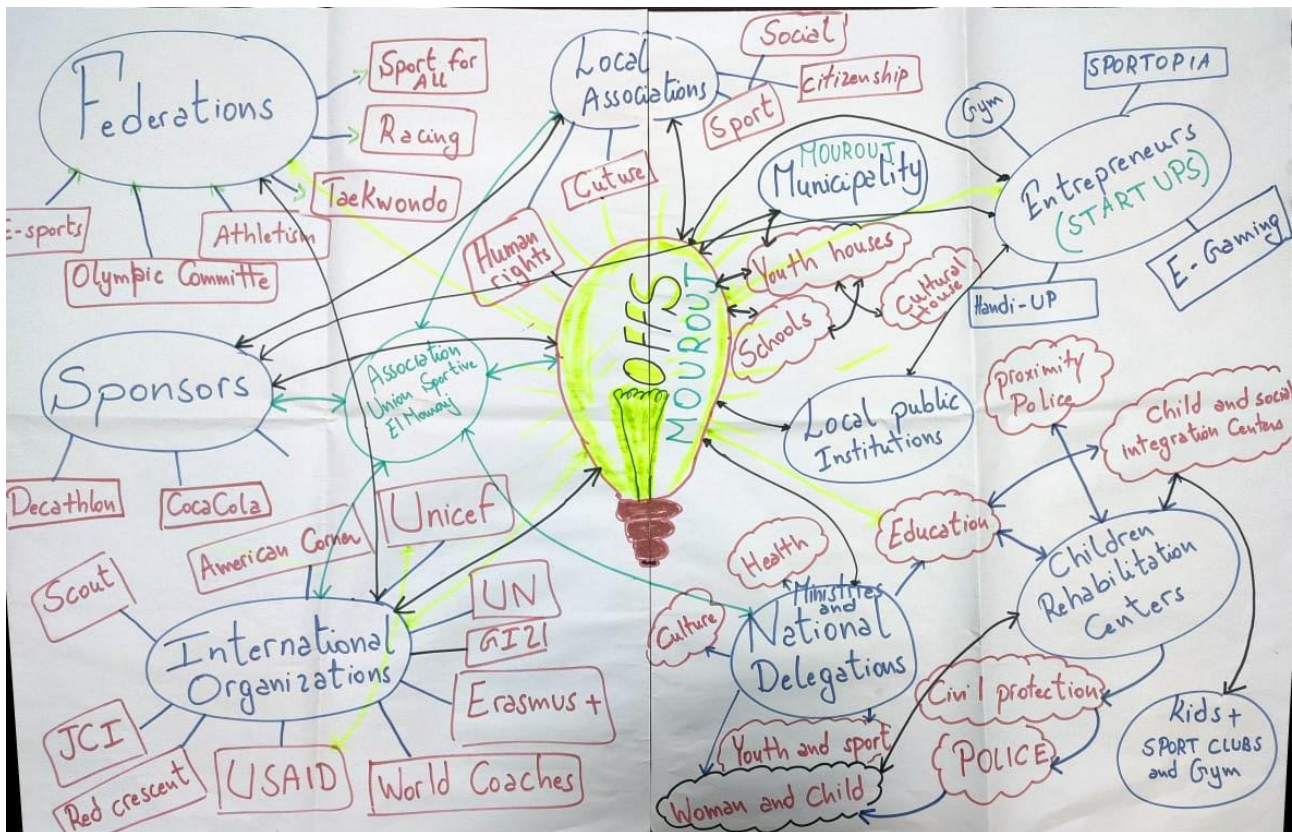


## Actor-network analysis in Tunisia



Cross Cultures Project Association

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## Introduction

The present report examines and describes some of the effects of Cross Cultures' DAPP-funded youth programme in Tunisia (2018-2022). The focus of the report is to examine the forms of capital (human, cultural, democratic, social, etc.) that the programme has helped to build through volunteer association life and other cross-cultural social networks.

To help give our analysis a structure and a framework of understanding, the research is inspired by Bruno Latour's descriptive Actor-Network Theory to help us better understand the value generated through cross-cultural social networks and what forms of capital our Community Organizers have built through their social and civic engagement in volunteer associations and other types of networks. Within this framework we have asked 5 out of our 12 youth clusters in Tunisia to map all the actors with whom they are interacting and collaborating - I.e. Who are the actors that have been directly involved in their network activities? Which actors have been indirectly involved? Against this background, Cross Cultures, in collaboration with our young Community Organizers, has prepared a description from two municipalities - Ettadhamen and ElMourouj - of the social networks they are part of, focusing on what is happening "in-between" the various actors. What do they cooperate about? These considerations have brought about numerous discussions on what makes a good and well-consolidated network, as opposed to a stagnating and less productive network.

## Context of intervention

In 2018, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cross Cultures signed a five-year agreement under the Danish Arab Partnership Program (DAPP) regarding implementation of a youth program in Tunisia, Jordan, and Morocco with the Specific objectives:

- 1) To mobilize and establish regional and national youth networks as youth leaders, coaches and coach assistants and build their capacity to independently organise Open Fun Football Schools and other community-based fun sport activities as a means to promote civil engagement and a culture of peace and non-violence, gender equality, appreciation of cultural and social diversity and human rights.*
- 2) To provide the youth networks with event management skills and consolidate their partnerships with local authorities, police, schools, sport federations, civil society organisations and other relevant sectors through organization and implementation of annual youth-organized sports festivals (HUB24).*
- 3) To facilitate self-organisation and co-creation of sustainable structures by providing the youth networks with fundraisings skills and enabling them to benefit from the opportunities offered by a consolidated and cross-sectorial network.*

The program is built around Cross Cultures Youth Leadership Education, which aims to capacitate the young volunteer Community Organizers to achieve a common goal in an ever-changing socio-political landscape.

Cross Cultures Youth Leadership Education is organized as an action learning process comprising three levels:

On the *Basic level* (60 hours/15 credits), the young community organizers are trained in theory and practice how to use the "social qualities of sport" and our specific fun sport approach as a pedagogical tool to



mobilize local resources and create positive relationships between people of different ethnic and social backgrounds.

On the *Advanced Level* (120 hours/20 credits) the community organizers are trained in how to bring the social qualities that arise between people when they play “a joyful game” together (friendships, cohesion, and social capital) into play outside the sporting arena.

On the *Final level – Own project* (120 hours/25 credits) the community organizers design, plan, organize, execute, and evaluate their own project to meet a special need in their community.



During the spring of 2021, Cross Cultures conducted a study of the impact our program had in relation to the employability of community organizers. The survey in Tunisia included all 249 community organizers that had completed the *Basic level* at Cross Cultures Youth Leadership Education during the season 2018-20 (batch 1).

The impact study found that 68% of the young respondents (169 pax) stated that their job situation had improved during their engagement with Cross Cultures as volunteers. Approximately 1/3 had found themselves a formal job as schoolteachers, in local CSOs or in government institutions. 2/3 maintained their livelihood through informal jobs as animators at large hotels and in shopping centres, and several made their day in small sports associations according to the Danish association model, accommodated by the municipal youth house. Others have made a livelihood from work at local radio stations.

Out of the 68% who had found themselves a job, 71% indicated that the skills and social networks they had acquired through the Cross Cultures programme have had a direct impact on their successful job situation. On this background, Cross Cultures is curious to learn more about what kind of cross-cultural networks the community organizers refer to. How did the social networks come about? How are they collaborating? And how can this analysis help us understand the effects of the young people's volunteer engagement in the local association life (based on the Danish Association model) and other cross-cultural social networks.

## Theory of Change

The Sport-for-Change concept builds on innovative, tried, and tested approaches<sup>1</sup>, and it is inspired by social concepts provided by amongst other:

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<sup>1</sup> [www.ccpa.eu/impact/reports](http://www.ccpa.eu/impact/reports)



Robert Putnam<sup>2</sup> and his insights on how citizenship and social capital in the voluntary sector connect communities, helping to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to live the life they dream of. Preben Astrup<sup>3</sup> who argues that volunteering, heterogeneous social networking, and community mobilization are fundamental prerequisites that can help unite communities and form the foundations of peace, social cohesion, and democracy. The American-Israeli professor Aaron Antonovsky<sup>4</sup> who links resilience – people’s ability to cope and handle long-term stressors – to what he terms a “sense of coherence”. This, he further links to the concepts of (1) comprehensibility, (2) manageability and (3) meaningfulness, while arguing that the stronger an individual's "sense of cohesion", the more resilient he or she is likely to be when faced with stressors, demands and challenges. Sara Lei Sparre<sup>5</sup> who argues that young people's resilience is enhanced when they gain practical experience in communicating and operationalizing their ideas and visions for society and when they are given the opportunity to be positive role models for other young people and for children. Finally, Cross Cultures’ approach is further reflected in the actor-network theory as presented by Bruno Latour. Latour’s idea of networks stipulates that network are scalable actors, and that actors are always made up of many heterogenous associations; in other words, the actor is the network. Importantly, according to Latour, social networks are not stable and homogenous structures with clear boundaries, rather they are organic processes involving heterogenous actors, who are constantly negotiating and re-negotiating programs of action<sup>6</sup>.

**NARRATIVE:** Being the next generation expected to take over in the reconstruction and development of post-conflict societies, young people should have the best opportunities to learn, build a network and express their views and ideas for the future. In this context, the partner organizations are particularly inspired by Latour’s Actor-Network Theory, wherein the actor is perceived as an integral part of a consolidated, cross-sectoral network, and the network is perceived as an actor in the individual’s life. It is within this type of organic network, that different forms of capital and exchanges arise, and where the individual benefits from the network as well as the network benefitting from the human-, political, cultural-, social- and/or economic capital of the individual.

**ASSUMPTION:** Youth in NEET situations are challenged by unemployment, lack of access to skills development, disillusion with politics and government, drug abuse and dim prospects of creating sustainable livelihoods for themselves, which may fuel further conflict and instability.

Consequently, the program’s assessment is that young people need an opportunity to develop applied, transferable skills and to impact society – as well as their own life - in a non-violent, productive manner. We believe that this can be achieved within the framework of civic and social engagement and action

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<sup>2</sup> Putnam Robert, (2001) Bowling alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community. Simon & Shuster Ltd

<sup>3</sup> Astrup, Preben, (2018) Frivillighed. Aarhus Universitetsforlag 2018

<sup>4</sup> Antonovsky, Aaron (1987). Unravelling the mystery of health. Josey Bass Publishers. p. 19 And: (1984) The sense of coherence as a determinant of health. In J. D Matarazzo et. al. (eds.), Behavioral health: A handbook of health enhancement. NY: Wiley.

<sup>5</sup> Sparre, Sara Lei (2016). A generation in the making – The formation of young volunteers in Cairo. PhD dissertation: Faculty of Social Sciences. University of Copenhagen. Department of Anthropology

<sup>6</sup> (Latour 2005:4)





learning. In this context namely grassroots sport and leadership education as well as cross-sectorial network cultivation.	
<p><b>INPUT:</b></p> <p><b>IF</b> Cross Cultures and our local partner organization Federation Tunisienne Sport Pour Touts (FTSPT) mobilize youth to facilitate social activities for children, which they find meaningful and worth investing energy in, inside and across local communities and on a voluntary basis,</p> <p><b>IF</b> FTSPT provide training in actionable leadership, community organizing and association/club formation (Youth Education level 2 and 3), with the purpose of encouraging engagement and meaningful participation,</p> <p><b>IF</b> Young people successfully engage in community organizing to address a specific issue and involving cross-sectorial stakeholders.</p>	<p><b>OUTPUT/OUTCOME:</b></p> <p><b>THEN</b> associations and consolidated regional and cross-sectorial networks arise,</p> <p><b>THEN</b> the young leaders and coaches have created an inter-regional heterogenous social network that provides young people with a platform to exchange experiences and perceptions with peers and stakeholders from neighboring regions/districts and conflicting communities, and to express their ideas and visions for society and the future,</p> <p><b>THEN</b> the young leaders and coaches have gained transferrable life skills and hands-on leadership experience as well as an opportunity to become active parts of a social network comprising key stakeholders such as local authorities, sports associations, NGOs, schools etc. thereby becoming active citizens, with a tangible means to impact their community, wider society, and the future.</p>
<p><b>IMPACT:</b> Through OFFS and other Sport-for-Change activities, the Leadership Education and practical experience, NEET youth have developed concrete skills within organizing, project management, advocacy etc. and become part of heterogenous cross-cultural networks while at the same time these networks have become an integrated part of the actors' lives.</p> <p>Correspondingly, through civic and social engagement and social network activities they consider (1) comprehensible, (2) manageable and (3) meaningful, they have gained practical experience in communicating and operationalizing their ideas and visions for society and given the opportunity to be positive role models for other young people and for children the young leaders have created opportunities and better life conditions for themselves and the local community at large. Thereby their resilience ('sense of coherence') and employability has been enhanced.</p>	

## Concluding remarks

Setting out to map our local youth-led networks, was initially under the assumption that they were small, however solid and consisting solely of local stakeholders and small businesses. Our assumption quickly drowned in the vast sea which the network turned out to be. Since our first batch of Community Organizers had started out in their social and civic endeavours, we had only been presented the tip of the iceberg. Maybe because we didn't possess the right language or asked the right questions? However, not until we started



doing a follow-up survey based on the aforementioned employability report, it became clear what Cross Cultures had been implicated in creating; our Tunisian partners has managed their operations in such a way that several of Cross Cultures' Community Organizers have developed their own social-entrepreneurial projects, associations and clubs in order to battle local issues such as women's rights, gender equality, delinquency, crime prevention and anti-radicalization. This has been successfully accomplished by mobilizing local resources and creating a livelihood through the formal and informal job sector.

Accordingly, the case studies below from the municipalities of Ettadhammen and ElMourouj show how the consolidated youth-led associations and their social projects are woven into an impressive fine-meshed network together with other local civil society actors, and how the youth-led associations have served in different ways as the octopus fathoming the different social networks and holding them together.

*Hence, the actor-network analysis illustrates that it is not Cross Cultures social fun sports activities and the associated Youth Leadership Education that are the "key" products of the intervention. Rather they constitute the structure that creates recognizable and playful frameworks that Cross Cultures use to mobilize young volunteer leaders and local resources and create social networks that can be mobilized again and again for different purposes. Thereby it is the effects of the local associations and social networks created that constitute the key product contributing to enhance hope and better the living conditions of children, young people, and their communities at large.*

An accelerator for several forms of capital, in general, has been the democratic formation of associations, inspired by the Danish Public Act and the Association Model ensuring democratic management, non-discriminatory inclusion and which is endorsed by local authorities<sup>7</sup>. Furthermore, the intrinsic structures in the Cross Cultures Youth Leadership Education, together with the fun sports activities has provided a framework for resource mobilisation to reach a common goal in an everchanging landscape of socio-political transactions. A direct result of the networks has, among others, been the increase in human capital through education and life-skill development, gender equality, crime-prevention, anti-radicalization, prevention of GBV, domestic violence and abuse of any kind, including sexual harassment through consolidated cross-sector social governance-structures (SSP/ child safeguarding).

Within this context, the case studies below illustrate how Cross Cultures through our community-based Sport-for-Change approach, the Youth Leadership Education and practical experience, have contributed to developing transferable skills within organizing, project management, advocacy etc. where the young community organizers have become part of heterogenous cross-cultural networks while at the same time these networks have become actors in their lives.

Hence, in Cross Cultures we are proud of our work in the MENA-region, as the actor-network analysis below confirm how our programme has supported the formation of tightly woven youth-led social networks that has been mobilized again and again for different purposes inside and outside the sporting arena, and how the Community Organizers through their associations and social networks have achieved something valuable that would not otherwise have happened.

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<sup>7</sup> The implemented association model is inspired by the five pillars are of unique Public Information Act, which is neutral vis-a-vis the association's purpose and Danish Association Model. Instead, it focuses on how the organization organizes itself to promote a grassroots democratic framework and an organizational structure that encourages active citizenship and helps to promote "a sense of cohesion". The five pillars of the Danish Association model are (a) statutes with a clear purpose, (b) a general assembly and an elected board, (c) non-profit, (d) open for all that sympathizes with its purpose, and (e) active membership. Cross Cultures has added a sixth statute in the form of a (f) child safeguarding policy/ code of conduct.







## Perspective and considerations

It is obvious that the social networks in Ettadhamen and ElMourouj we have analyzed below arguably are among the best consolidated networks within Cross Culture's programs in Tunisia, however, there is still no doubt that the other youth-led networks are providing an important platform to act on, thereby influencing their own lives and their local community at large. (Cross Cultures is in the process of describing all networks in the MENA-region).

However, the above analysis has made way for two important questions in our future work: (a) How do we measure the value of social networks and relations? and (b) what constitutes as good social network as opposed to a less functional one?

## The value of a social network

Firstly, Cross Cultures consider the value of social networks can be expressed as the opposite of money - *from economy to weconomy*.<sup>8</sup>

Secondly, we consider the effects of the social networks and relationships the key products of our intervention, because

- We can do more together than individually
- Money is about consuming, ending and unifying. Relationships and social networks are about mobilizing, building and winning on diversity
- Relationships and social communities create value that would not otherwise be created because they are built through exchange and complementarity. And
- Relations and social networks can be mobilized again and again for different purposes, but only as long as it is considered important (e.g. acute necessity, accommodating anger, hope, solidarity, "the feeling of being able to make a difference", etc.).

## What constitutes a good network?

Following the actor-network theory, the social networks is not perceived as classic organizations. Rather social networks are perceived as "an organic slippery bar of soap" – i.e., processes of organizing with heterogenous actors who are constantly negotiating and re-negotiating their joint actions. Thus, social networks successfully creating different forms of capital when (a) children and youth become actors in heterogenous cross-cultural social networks and (b) these networks conversely become actors in their life<sup>9</sup>.

In teaching our coaches how to mobilize, organize and manage a social network of volunteer leaders and coaches combined with a friendly and open participatory environment based on sport-for-change, we have introduced them to the Danish Public Information Act and Association Model. As both cannot exist without the democratic values of election and voting for a general assembly and active membership, among other, several of our stakeholders report an increase in *democratic values* and knowledge on the matter, as the

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<sup>8</sup> Tine Hansen, Eukaria. *The value of social networks*. 2022 Unpublished paper.

<sup>9</sup> Bruno Latour. *Reassembling the Social – An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*. Oxford 2002:4



MENA-region has since The Revolution in 2011 been vying for democratic governments. We can see the democratic impact and values reflected in our networks and local municipalities, such as El Mourouj and Ettadhamen.

In Cross Cultures, we believe that a thriving well consolidated network is grounded in active membership, which obliges and engages the individual to take active part in its development, thus contributing with their personal experiences and competencies. This enforces the argument of the duality of the actor-network; the actor being an active part of the network, parallel with the network being an active part in the individual's life. Furthermore, through the exchange and utilization of human capital the network becomes an invaluable actor for the individual volunteer as the network – community if you will – empowers the individual. It is therefore the reciprocity in knowledge- and skill-sharing that the network benefits and thrives, making it possible to become agile and adapt to quickly changing socio-political landscapes as an organism.

Comparing them to the networks that are self-sustainable, developing and innovating on a regular basis, we thus see that one of the main criteria for a good network is a reciprocal exchange of knowledge and competencies as well as a “free structure”. The networks are operating locally with freedom under responsibility, thus reporting continuously back to wherever needs to be reported without being controlled in its every movement and development.

In such circumstances it is thus Cross Cultures responsibility as programme manager to facilitate the necessary conditions for the Community Organizers and social networks, to reach a common goal under everchanging conditions.



## Actor-network analysis in Tunisia

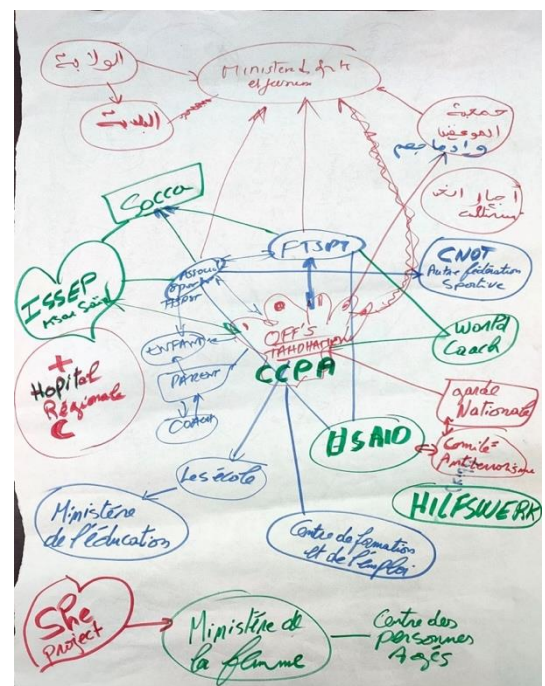
*“Tunisia witnessed tremendous change after the Jasmin Revolution, in the government and political system, as the former dictatorship controlled local authorities, media, repressed political opposition and freedom of speech among other. In this context, the democratic Danish association model, in terms of electing and voting for members of the general assembly, has contributed not only to the consolidation of the principle of democracy and freedom of speech, but also to encourage young people to get more involved in local affairs as well as political affairs.” – Soufiane Zarraa*

The following analyses is based on the network diagrams made during a workshop in Ettadhamen and ElMourouj, Tunisia, with Cross Cultures’ volunteer coaches, Community Organizers, and local partners (2-3 February 2022). The networks comprise key beneficiaries (kids, parents, coaches), Ministries (youth and sports + woman affairs, national education), Local authorities (State and Municipality), national and international NGOs (Donors).

### Ettadhamen Network Analysis

#### Area Profile

Although one of the most densely populated neighbourhoods in Tunisia, Ettadhamen is also one of the most marginalized areas of the capitol with very limited economic and cultural opportunities for youth, very high unemployment rates and many NEET-youth. The lack of opportunities and youth’s exposure to socio-economic and cultural hardship in the area, as well as their pejorative perception of the local government and its capacity to address their grievances, constitute factors that drive the youth of Ettadhamen towards violent extremism and constitute a rewarding ground for violent radicalization processes and violent extremist organizations (VEOs). According to empirical data from the Ministry of interior and INS, more than 8.000 youth from the area were recruited by VEOs since 2011 due to the set of enabling cultural, social, and political conditions in Ettadhamen.



Ettadhamen Network Diagram



## Blue

The most essential partner organization in the organigram is the *Fédération Tunisienne du Sport Pour Tous* (FTSPT) as it's the host organization of Cross Cultures' operations in Tunisia. Furthermore, FTSPT offers financial and administrative support in terms of official letters/authorizations by activating their national network with the Ministries. Hence, the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MOYS) established youth houses in Ettadhamen, in cooperation with the state and the municipality thanks to the recommendation of FTSPT and the quality of the Cross Cultures' activities. Thus, it is within the framework of this youth house that ATSL began, and today stands as a sustainable and independent institution, aiming at helping youth and children. Today ATSL has an array of sporting activities such as football, taekwondo, boxing, Thai boxing, gymnastics, dance, triathlon, cycling, athletics, weightlifting, basketball, wrestling, volleyball, boules, and also sports for kids with special needs, where we can find 1 deaf child beneficiary in the football activity, and 4 autistics in taekwondo and gymnastics. Moreover, the association is offering its activities for 1.700 kids with special needs monthly, and 600 kids weekly, managed by 26 volunteer coaches who are graduated from physical education universities but unemployed. In its daily function approximately 2.280 youth and kids come through the association every day to participate in sports and other social activities

Added to that, FTSPT is offering national coach training, seminars, and equipment, through Cross Cultures, for the volunteer coaches of ATSL, as the association is affiliated to the Federation.

Starting from this point, the relationship between ATSL and the primary stakeholders/ beneficiaries (kids, parents, and coaches) was introduced through Open Fun Football School-activities (OFFS) for kids, within the framework of Cross Cultures. In the Ettadhamen network, building on Cross Cultures principles and action-learning, the child is constantly at the centre. However, the child is not the only beneficiary. Parents are also involved as key stakeholders, as the association's activities aimed to develop the sociocultural competences of the child through sports and dialogue which directly benefits (positively) the family, school, and society. Thus, based on the principles behind the Danish Association Model, many parents became volunteer coaches with the assistance of Cross Cultures' coaches, where they learned the basics of Cross Cultures' pedagogical and didactical principles on how to facilitate and organize a training session as well as how to engage in dialogue with children.

Meanwhile, the coach is the main stakeholder involved directly in the process of communication and knowledge sharing between the different clusters of the diagram as they are transferring the competencies, knowledge, and skills acquired with Cross Cultures (mobilize, organize, and manage a network of volunteer leaders and coaches, project, and sport event management, how to address a special need in the community, etc.). Hence, the relationship between coach and parent, in a utilitarian sense, has benefitted family and society due to the philosophy behind the activities. This has conversely benefitted the Community Organizers to teach them how they can start building their own social network.

Observing ATSL's relationship to schools in the area, Cross Cultures' coaches are the primary reason for this to have developed through the organization of OFFS, sport-for-all-caravans and festivals for children. Consequently, the Ministry of National Education invited the ATSL as an executive local partner with the Austrian Hilfswerk organization to furnish 2 primary schools with sports equipment and organize weekly PE-classes for schools in Ettadhamen reaching more than 2.000 kids with 12 of our Community Organizers.



## Green

*“It’s important to note that the network which, mainly consists of international organizations and international donors, came to be through the FTSPT and Cross Cultures” – Marwen*

Observing the direct contributors of the network, the most famous physical education university in Tunisia, ISSEP Ksar Said, plays a major role. It is located 10 minutes away from the ATSL’s office in Ettadhamen and given the impact that Cross Cultures’ programmes has had on the employability rate in Tunisia since 2018, the university asked ATSL for a partnership aiming at recruiting young students as volunteers to be part of our Youth Leader Education to strengthen their academic and practical skills. Furthermore, it would mean for the students to be involved in the association’s social and civic initiatives. In return, ATSL can use and invest in the cultural-, human- and social- capital of the university as well as its network such as the Ministry of Higher Education and scientific research.

The graduated but unemployed teachers have directly benefited from many international programmes, such as the Dutch World Coaches programme (the Royal Football Association of Netherlands - KNVB) organized in partnership with FTSPT through CCPA; a course/seminar about World Coaches’ coaching skills and life-skill development. Furthermore, the teachers are offered equipment in return for their participation to provide training and facilitate activities for local youth and children. Thus, organically expanding the activity network. Our coaches facilitate and organize activities in Ettadhamen for kids using the coaching concept from Cross Cultures’ Youth Leader Education and KNVB’s World Coach programme.

Based on the official statistics about Ettadhamen, the area is well known by the high rates of crime, delinquency, radicalization, and violent extremism. Thus, ATSL has been approached by USAID who has funded a project for 130.000\$, called ‘Ma3an’. As violent extremists and extremist ideologies are unlikely to lead young people towards violent extremism without a particular set of enabling cultural, social, and political grounds, ATSL, with the support of Ma3an, work toward designing and implementing a positive youth development and empowerment programme as a measure to prevent the further spread of violent extremism among the youth of Ettadhamen, thus increasing their resilience towards VE and VEOs. This is achieved through the formation of a consolidated social network, inspired from Cross Cultures SSP-approach and social governance structure. In February 2022 ATSL was granted another 90.000\$ by USAID for another project under the umbrella of Ma3an called “Peace Ambassadors Ettadhamen”.

The Child Protection initiative, inspired by the cross sectoral Danish SSP-initiative, was introduced in the Cross Cultures Youth Leader Education, with the youth houses, social reintegration centres and SOS organizations (Save Our Souls) as the working grounds. Thanks to the success of the initiative and the help of FTSPT and ATSL, the Ministry of Woman Affaires invited ATSL to be part of a project called “SHE”. The aim of SHE is to give more agency to women through the enhancement of woman empowerment, combatting domestic and gender-based violence, sexual harassment, abuse of any kind. Furthermore, to battle conservative and patriarchal structures suppressing women’s rights and female participation in society, mix gendered sport activities based on the Open Fun Football Schools philosophy as well as dialogue sessions about topics on gender equality and political awareness are organized.

## Red

Another example of how Cross Cultures’ activities and engagement has moved from the sporting arena into civil society, through voluntarism and civic engagement, are the COVID-19 awareness campaigns managed by our Community Organizers across Tunisia. Due to the pandemic’s devastating and isolating consequences



all our networks in Tunisia managed to develop a “Corona brigade” and disperse information on proper hygiene, sickness-prevention, and measures of responsiveness through a Covid-19 awareness campaign, targeting every individual in their vicinity. This was done instead of the Open Fun Football Schools, which were due to take place during the project period, but due to national and regional restrictions were cancelled. As part of the initiative to confront the COVID-19 pandemic in Tunisia, volunteer coaches of Cross Cultures in cooperation with FTSPT and ATSL’s network carried out awareness campaigns combining social-distancing procedures, the use of protective gear, distribution of disinfectant, food, and water etc. Some of the campaigns were carried out under the slogan “Masks for all”, “Protecting children to protect society”, and “By protecting children, we build a better tomorrow”. These campaigns have been organised in consultation and cooperation with the Tunisian Ministry of Health and has reached almost all the 24 regions of Tunisia.

Furthermore, in relation to the high rise of the Delta-variant, Tunisia was gripped by another COVID-19 surge, and was for a moment the country with the highest covid-19 related mortality per capita in the MENA-region and Africa. Thus, the MOYS and MOH, in collaboration with the youth networks of Cross Cultures – herein ATSL – organized a national “Vaccination Day” targeting athletes from 18 years and up as well as elderly. The youth network assisted during the national Covid-19 vaccination programme, helping citizens do their administrative affairs by organizing the entry process, ensuring physical distancing, distributing masks, administering vaccines, and sterilizing departments and streets in partnership with local associations such as the Scouts and the Red Crescent. Hence, encouraging citizens to get vaccinated, especially since a large number of people were against receiving the vaccination.





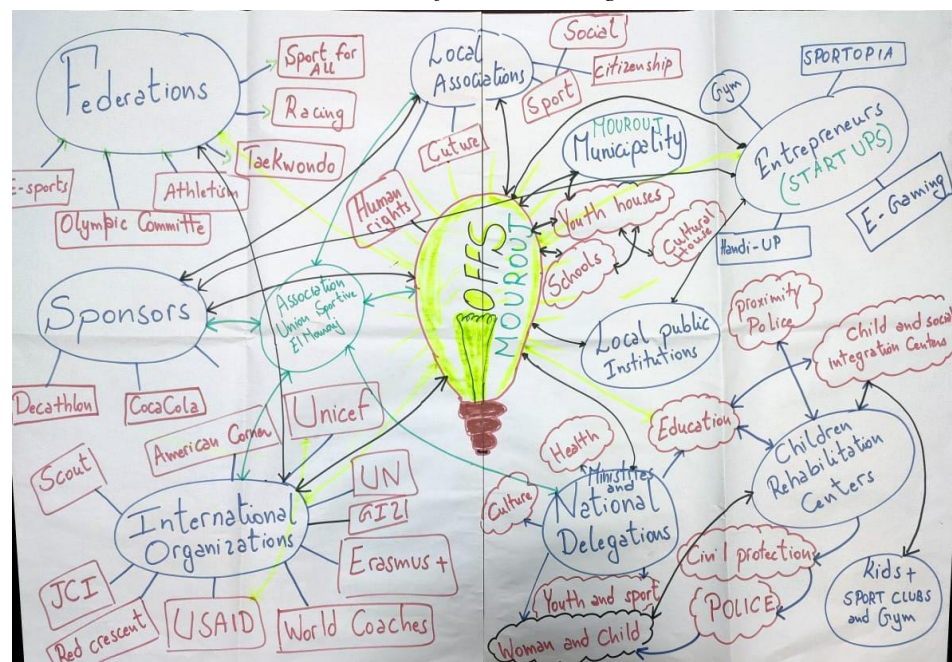
## ElMourouj Network Analysis

### Union Sportive ElMourouj

The association *Union Sportive ElMourouj* (USM) is founded and directed under Cross Cultures Community Organizer Hatem Zir and Mme Khaoula Harbaoui. Both hold a master's degree as a teacher in Physical Education and has been part of Cross Cultures' volunteer coaches since 2014. Khaoula, as a multidisciplinary coach, became a teacher at the Institute of Physical Education at the Centre of Defence and Social Integration in 2016. Finally, she was appointed national coordinator of the Child Safeguarding in Sport in 2019.

*ElMourouj Network Diagram*

In the network workshop (04.02.2022) aiming at mapping the social network of USM, Hatem's and Cross Cultures volunteers drew the centre of the network in the shape of a lantern to illustrate how Cross Cultures' activities and education function as a beacon and eye-opener for the individual Community Organizer; "We teach them to build their own networks, thus the lantern make them see their surrounding community and social



issues within. From there, they can see more clearly what stakeholders to involve and how to engage people and donors, so that they can start off in their local community and find institutional stakeholders who can help them form partnerships with international NGO's and partners." – Soufiane Zarraa.

### Interrelatedness

Like ATSL USM has the of function an umbrella-associations for an array of sport clubs which makes it possible to create affiliations to several federations and ministries in the Tunisian Government. However, this will be elaborated upon momentarily. With inspiration from the Danish Association Model, and a democratic vision, the association is organized in a way that elections for the general assembly are held every fourth year, to secure continuous rotation in professional competencies and a passionate general assembly. Furthermore, the elections are organized and managed by an independent election-committee, whose members consist of stakeholders from the local municipality and government. The independent committee receives candidatures from candidates and organize the elections in a democratic and transparent manner.



## **Detected synergies**

The municipality plays a major role in USM's welfare, as it provides financial support to the association with €2.000 per year as well as administrative authorizations to facilitate access to the municipal playgrounds, sport facilities, office spaces, etc. Thus, the role of USM is to engage local youth in civic society and encourage them to participate in local and political affairs through grassroots sports. The association has succeeded well, as four of the youth volunteers ran for the municipal office and three won seats in the municipal council, while the fourth won the mayoral post. Thus, a great deal of synergy is created within the municipality as it contains five committees – culture, education, children, people with disabilities/special needs and sports – where the USM association president, Hatem, represents the sports committee. All the committees have monthly status meetings, which have yielded large contributions to local association-life, as well as contributed to facilitating the network, partnership, and coordination between public institutions. The synergies have resulted in a successful planning and execution of annual sport- and cultural events as well as educational programmes, hosted by the local youth house, cultural house, and primary schools.

The abovementioned synergy, discovered during the mapping of the network, exists not only between public institutions. It is also present between USM and local sport clubs and cultural associations as well as human rights organizations. These are all fully included in the organization diagram and official partner of the USM association.

## **International partnerships**

Based on Cross Cultures activities and Youth Leader Education, USM is a valuable actor within the community of ElMourouj through volunteer social and civic engagement, doing various sports activities, life-skill training, social entrepreneurship benefitting local stakeholders by creating small day-to-day jobs thus increasing the local livelihood. Simultaneously partner organizations, NGO's and other actors in the network have been providing cultural, social, and human rights-based activities, events, and educational material.

Thus, circling back to USM's role as an umbrella-organization for sport clubs in the field of football, taekwondo, athletics, and e-sports has enabled the association to be affiliated to several national sports federations and ministries. The affiliations have secured support in the form of equipment, education, and co-financing to secure the continuity of each club's activities for more than 500 children. An example hereof, are the e-sports club. They were kick-started after Cross Cultures introduced an e-camp training seminar during the first lockdown in 2020 (please see Cross Cultures' Virtual Clubhouse). The goal was to sustain social and civic activities through e-gaming, thus battling some of the consequences that followed the solitary confinement, such as domestic abuse and violence, depression, and other health related issues. Thus, USM started different e-sport teams which resulted in support from the national e-sport federation in the form of financial support as well as the right to participate in different championships and tournaments. The federations furthermore enable the beneficiaries of USM to participate in tournaments, national and international championships. Union Sportive ElMourouj has contributed with the formation and training of athletes who are now in the Tunisian National Athletics Team as well as different national e-sport initiatives.

In terms of national and international actors in the network, USM was introduced to these through the federations and various stakeholders. Thus, it came to be – in relation to an accord with Association Ettadhamen Sport et Loisir – that KNVB and their World Coach programme was included in the network, giving the volunteer coaches the necessary life-skill training which then included them in the aforementioned



“Ma3an” programme to combat delinquency, religious extremism and VEO’s through active citizenship and voluntarism. The latter is inspired by Cross Cultures. The programme was initiated in the local youth houses, nationally.

The local scout-associations, Red Crescent and JCI (Jeune Chambre Internationale de Tunisie) were included in the network through the youth houses, as USM and they had a reciprocal exchange in volunteers through social and civic engagement. The exchange contributed directly to the national vaccination programme with the Ministry of Health, as mentioned in the ATSL-analysis.

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) was introduced through the local youth houses and offered training sessions and seminars in sports-for-development (S4D) for actors and USM members, donating sports equipment worth of 2.000€. The equipment is available for all associations engaged in the S4D-programme.

Furthermore, Erasmus+ was included as USM applied for exchange programmes in which many of the volunteers were selected to travel and partake in the European Voluntary Service in the EU along with other international organizations.

With Cross Cultures engagement in the DAPP-programme, our Moroccan partner, Tibu Africa, came on an exchange visit facilitated by the DAPP-financed program to experience the Tunisian association life – Cross Culture’s facilitated networks – in effect. The international synergy between Cross Cultures’ partners in the MENA-region thus proved to be successful in mobilizing youth at a local and international level through positive relation building. This was witnessed by the American Embassy in Tunisia, who granted USM 25.000\$ in the category of public diplomacy. The grant was applied for by USM, and the association amongst others got its recommendations from Cross Cultures’ Moroccan DAPP-partner, Tibu Africa.

### **Social entrepreneurship and employability**

Regarding employability, a main concern in the Tunisian government, official statistics from the *Tunisian National Institute of Statistics* (INS) conclude that the unemployment rate in Tunisia has increased from 13% in 2010 to 17.8% in 2020. Likewise, the number of unemployed university graduates rose from 130.000 to 300.000 in 2020<sup>10</sup>. With the ambition to alleviate this toll, FTSPT and Cross Cultures forged a strong partnership based on a clear strategy to advocate for economic empowerment through a sustainable association model, social and civic engagement, and social entrepreneurship through sports. As a result, and over the course of establishing USM, many volunteer coaches – starting with Cross Cultures – have created their own projects, with departure in the sporting arena, and have ultimately helped alleviate local unemployment by creating sustainable income and increased livelihood through informal work. Thus, since 2018, 15 out of 30 volunteer community organizers from USM have been employed both formally within ministries and abroad, and informally in local gyms, sport clubs and youth houses.

Furthermore, Cross Cultures has supported a few start-ups with seed-money and the necessary competence-development as well as guidance during the process. An example hereof is the “Handi-Up” programme whose goal is to give agency to disabled people in sports- and association life by endorsing sports such as wheelchair-basketball and blind football. Another example is the “Sportopia” online platform offering live personal- and team based training and online coaching to achieve personal fitness goals. In addition, Union

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.ins.tn/en/statistiques/153>



Sportive ElMourouj is supporting and funding new start-ups through its vast network of actors (sponsors, partners, stakeholders) in Tunisia by facilitating contact and awareness campaigns.

### **Child protective governance structures**

On a final note, USM is in continuous dialogue and coordination with regional institutions and delegations regarding the implementation of initiatives and programmes withing culture, health, youth, and sport thus accommodating national ministries interests. In the context, the association is coordinating with the regional delegation of Women and children's Affairs to facilitate the access of Cross Cultures' and USM's coaches to a centre for delinquent children in ElMourouj. The initiative is based on Cross Cultures Child Safeguarding initiative, and will contain activities such as OFFS, yoga, aerobic and taekwondo managed by Khaoula, presented above. Khaoula has installed a clear governance structure, resembling the SSP-structure already elaborated in the ATSL-chapter. The Child Safeguarding programme which is originally taught on the Basic Level of Cross Cultures Youth Leadership Education and has later become a national initiative in Tunisia – because of Khaoula – to help vulnerable children and NEET-youth in sport. Khaoula has adapted the initiative to all aspects of association-life – from sexual harassment and abuse as well as domestic and gender-based violence (GBV). Khaoula's involvement is a success story within Cross Cultures, and she is currently hired through the *Ministry of Youth and Sport* (MOYS) working with the *Fédération Tunisienne des Sport Pour Tous* (FTSPT). From there, she has installed Cross Cultures coaches in all regions of Tunisia, through our youth-led networks, together with experts in child protection and sexual harassment. These are installed in coordination committees with local police forces and social services. Together they have made educational awareness campaigns for parents, children, schoolteachers, and relevant stakeholders about domestic violence, -abuse of any kind, sexual harassment, and neglect in schools, sport clubs and associations as well as public spaces in general. Furthermore, Khaoula is providing educational and sports-based workshops at the Child and Social Integration Centre ElMourouj. Her work primarily involves youth aged 10-15, with an expertise in young school drop-outs, youth and children who are socially marginalized, threatened by delinquency, in conflict with the law and/ or youth and kids who have been flagged by the delegation of the Child Protection due to domestic violence, neglect or abuse. Thus, Khaoula uses physical activity in her work with youth and kids, as a way to teach them about gender equality, bodily awareness, a healthy lifestyle and basic life skills. Furthermore, physical activities and fun games is a means to harness negative energy from the children and influence them positively, thus creating a positive social impact in reducing juvenile delinquency and increasing educational agency.





### Appendix 3: Medenine Network Diagram

