



IMPACT REPORT

UNITING THROUGH THE POWER OF FOOTBALL



February 2020 – May 2022

***An Innovative
Project Empowering
Young People
through Football
and Humanitarian
Education to become
Agents of Change
in Building Resilient
Communities.***



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is extremely grateful for all the support received from Generation Amazing in 2020-2022 for making the 'Uniting through the Power of Football' project a reality. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the technical assistance and financial support provided during the development process. The IFRC expresses its appreciation to the entire Generation Amazing project team for their invaluable support, contributions and dedication¹. Our deepest gratitude goes to all 4 implementing/partner National Societies: the Argentine Red Cross², the Iraqi Red Crescent³, the Myanmar Red Cross Society⁴, and the Uganda Red Cross Society⁵, especially to their leadership, project teams, staff, facilitators and volunteers for making this project a reality on the ground – without their passion, dedication and unlimited efforts, especially amidst all the implementation challenges faced, this project would have never come to life. The logistic and strategic support provided by the various National Society branch managers, local partners, and stakeholders within the 4 implementing countries are also highly acknowledged. We are especially thankful for the support that was provided by the Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change (YABC) trainers⁶ from the Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies in the IFRC network, who were coached by the YABC/F4D master trainers⁷ on the delivery of the initial Training of Facilitators. We would also like to thank the individuals who contributed to the development of this partnership in its initial stages⁸, as well as the technical team who led the co-creation and development of the YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum together⁹. Finally, a sincere thanks to the IFRC regional and country offices colleagues¹⁰ for their invaluable coordination support, as well as an acknowledgement of the IFRC project team in Geneva¹¹ for leading the continuous technical development, adaptation, implementation, evaluation, and reporting of this pilot project in close cooperation with the National Societies. It is with gratitude that we extend thanks and appreciation to all the individuals who have contributed to making this project a success.

- 1 We are especially thankful for the strong support that was provided by Nasser Al Khori (Executive Director), Paulette Fortes Sanchez (A/Programmes and Operations Director), Vasiliki Topalidou (Programme Delivery Manager), Davies Banda (Academic Adviser at Generation Amazing), Michael Richardson (Football for Development Expert), Mohammed Almuhammad (Partnership Officer), Amabel Agnes Vargas (Operations Senior Officer), Jonathan Miseroy (Strategy Officer), Moza Al Mohannadi (Advisor to the Secretary General of the Supreme Committee), Sara Al Hemaiddi (Marketing and Communications Director), Avantika Nair (Marketing Manager), and Vibhav Gautam (Marketing and Communications Officer).
- 2 Special thanks to Diego Tipping (President), Maria Cecilia Villafaña (Secretary General), Natalia Gennero (National Secretary for Human and Organisational Development), Florencia Tinnirello (National Director for Cooperation and Strategic Alliances), Carolina Coronel (National Coordinator of Territorial Development), Macarena Brechner (Former National Director of Organisational Development), Luciana Marino (National Coordinator of Youth), Santiago Ramayo (National Director of Communication), Maria Martin (Undersecretary for Communication and Marketing), Rodrigo Cuba (Undersecretary for Human Development), Ayelén Pezzuto (Undersecretary for Organisational Development), Adriel Valentineti (Undersecretary for Logistics and Systems) and Luis Jimenez Blanco (Financial Officer).
- 3 Special thanks to Dr. Mohammed Al-Khuzai (Under Secretary-General), Dr. Tara Barqi Rashid (Vice-President) and Mohammed Kamel (Officer / Youth Department).
- 4 Special thanks to Dr. Lynn Lynn Thet, Hnin Phyu (Deputy Director, Organizational Development Department), Mr. Thet Nyi Nyi Minn (Project Coordinator), Mr. Htet Ye Aung (Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Coordinator), Ms. Tun Nandar, Ms. Tin Tin Kiang (Former Assistant Project Officer), Hsu Mon (YABC trainer), and States and Regions' representatives.
- 5 Special thanks to Robert Kwesiga (Secretary General), Johnson Jjemba (Director Branch & Membership Development), John Atugonza (Youth Officer), and Branch Managers.
- 6 Special thanks to Ana Ana Artavia Duran and Luis Sanchez (Costa Rican Red Cross), Axel Sengenes-Cros and Thameur Debouba (French Red Cross), Farhan Sohail (Pakistan Red Crescent Society), Sona Gevorgyan (Armenian Red Cross) Amal Emam and Tamer Ramadan (Egyptian Red Crescent Society), Hnin Phyu Phyu Myint, Hsu Mon Kyaw Tint, May Phyo Thiri San, Wai Yam Shin, and Hein Htet Zaw (YABC trainers/peer educators from the Myanmar Red Cross Society), Paing Soe Thu, Shine Thu Aung, Nu Nu Htwe, Kyaw Nyi Nyi Zin (Football United Coaches, Myanmar).
- 7 Dr. Davies Banda, Michael Richardson and Reema Chopra (YABC International Master Trainer).
- 8 Dr. Jemilah Mahmood, Elhadj As Sy, Alessandro Fedele, Prof. Cecile Aptel, Charles Strickland, and Dr. Khaled Diab.
- 9 Dr. Davies Banda, Micheal Richardson, Charlotte Tocchio (Humanitarian Education Coordinator) and Reema Chopra.
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FOREWORD

Victor Hugo once wrote that “there is nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come”. In 2016, when the initial idea of bringing together two well-known brands, that of the Red Cross and Red Crescent represented by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) with the FIFA World Cup, the idea was to see how we can leverage the transformative power of football alongside Humanitarian Education to reach out to marginalised and vulnerable youth. Little did we know that when the agreement would be signed 4 years later between the IFRC and Generation Amazing (GA) - the human and social legacy programme of the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy, Qatar 2022 - the world would be staring into an unknown abyss brought about by an unprecedented global lockdown amidst a pandemic. To launch a new program that is reliant on face-to-face engagement using Football for Development at a time when all programmes were either cancelled, postponed, or adapted for online delivery coupled with political challenges in certain contexts, was extremely challenging. Yet, the versatility of a project being piloted meant that there was room for trial, error, failure, and learning. Suddenly, there emerged a real opportunity to pilot a project in different formats, with different iterations under different conditions to see how versatile this new hybrid curriculum model (combining IFRC’s flagship YABC programme with the GA’s Football for Development methodology) was and to adapt to local challenges and specific needs of the youth.

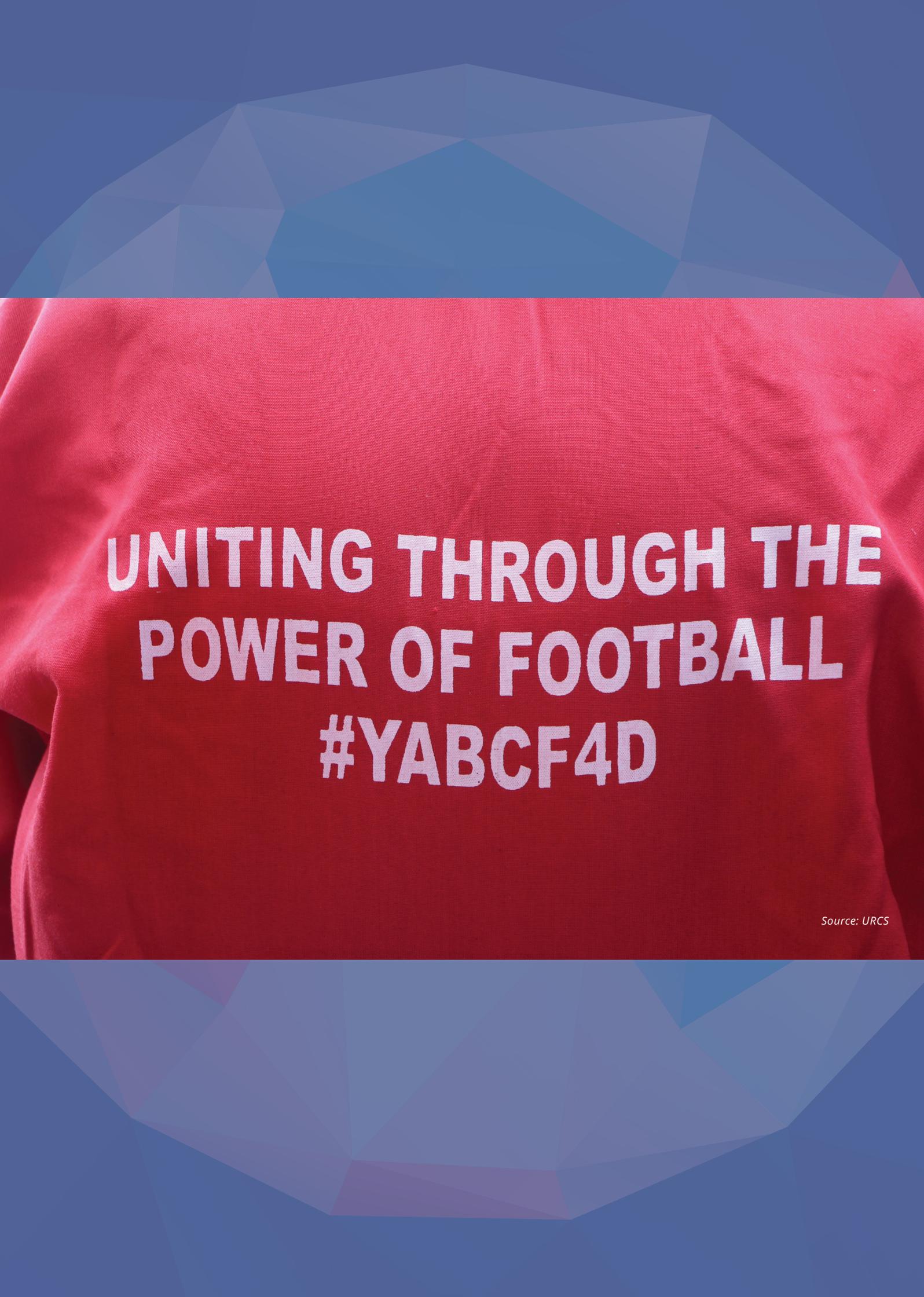
Suffice to say that even we have been blown away by the stories of impact and effect. The project came at the right time, filling a gap for young people brought about by the disruptions in education, employment, and social engagement, connecting young people with their communities, and giving them hope at a time when hope seemed lost. Through the micro grants component, the project also re-energised many young people with a sense of purpose, to set up social ventures and develop entrepreneurship activities. These stories of impact resonate through the case studies that accompany this report but are also found in the testimonials [online](#). All of these bear witness to the power of football and Humanitarian Education to bring people together. They also demonstrate the special power of combining this with youth leadership and social entrepreneurship to mobilise vulnerable at-risk



young people and communities in out-of-school activities. The stories show how these activities have helped prevent the occurrence of violence, improved access to education and employment, ensured better social inclusion and built resilience in excluded at-risk communities. These in turn will lead to healthy lifestyles, greater engagement, fewer problems with peers, and increased pro-social behaviour. The project and the stories highlight that providing socio-emotional life skills through sport can equip this generation of young people with the necessary skills and mindset to change the world for the better – not someday in the future – right now.

The stories of this project highlight a story of now. Youth are not the future!! They are the present. They are hungry to lead and imagine innovative approaches to make their communities healthier, safer, and more inclusive, while writing new narratives of who they are and what they are capable of. All that we as institutions should do is to support them, accompany them, empower them, provide them agency and opportunity, mentor them and learn from them through intergenerational dialogue. The result is not only a beautiful game but a hopeful, peaceful and inclusive community.

Dr. Amjad Saleem, Manager: Volunteering, Youth and Education Development & Project Manager “Uniting through the Power of Football”

A red t-shirt is centered in the image, featuring white text. The background is a blue geometric pattern of triangles. The text on the t-shirt reads:

**UNITING THROUGH THE
POWER OF FOOTBALL
#YABCF4D**

Source: URCS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UNITING THROUGH THE POWER OF FOOTBALL

The project “Uniting Through the Power of Football” was spearheaded by IFRC and implemented in partnership with Generation Amazing (GA) – the human and social legacy programme of the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy, Qatar 2022¹.

The project identified innovative opportunities to address current challenges related to youth isolation, exclusion, and violence prevention, and was piloted in 4 countries with different contexts: Argentina, Iraq, Myanmar and Uganda, with their respective National Societies – the Argentine Red Cross (ARC), Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS), Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS), and the Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS).

The project brought together two initiatives into a unique and innovative Hybrid Curriculum:

- i) the Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change (YABC) – the IFRC’s global Humanitarian Education programme on the promotion of a culture of non-violence and peace through youth empowerment and leadership, and the development of self-awareness and socio-emotional life skills, such as active listening, empathy, critical thinking, non-violent communication, personal resilience, and inner peace, to ‘walk the talk’ through inner change, and
- ii) GA’s Football for Development (F4D) curriculum – leverages the power of sport, particularly football, to teach key life skills such as leadership, as well as unity and gender equality, through a twin-track approach coupling the practice of both life skills and sports skills within the context of a football game or drill. It uses football to positively impact lives and foster sustainable social development in vulnerable communities.

The project’s aims and expected impact was to address societal issues such as discrimination, exclusion, and violence by engaging vulnerable youth – particularly those from communities at risk of exclusion, conflict or violence, and from refugee, host, or internally displaced communities – and equipping them with leadership and socio-emotional life skills through football and learning opportunities. Moreover, it also seeks to develop their social entrepreneurship skills and spirit through the provision of small grants and training, enabling young people to become ‘Agents of Change’ inspiring and driving change in their communities – starting with oneself. The underlying drive of the project is to improve social inclusion, inspire youth and their communities to lead healthy and active lifestyles, enhance their resilience, psychosocial and physical well-being, and promote a culture of non-violence and peace through sport and quality education – thereby contributing to meeting several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at once. This project is piloting a community-based model of resilience using Humanitarian Education and Sport for Development to address issues of identity, belonging and cultural isolation. It is testing the abovementioned outcomes, identified in the multi-country project design, to assess the effectiveness and impact of the integrated YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum.

The ‘Uniting through the Power of Football’ project in each country entailed 3 main phases. First, the Training of Facilitators (ToF) over 6-12 days, delivered in a face-to-face or online format, where approximately 25-32 young people were trained as YABC & F4D facilitators and equipped with skills, knowledge, attitudes, and experiences to deliver the YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum. In the second phase, 264-460 children, adolescents and young adults in each country took part in

¹ launched in 2010 during Qatar’s successful bid for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022

the 4 to 12-week YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum. The curriculum comprised of 24 YABC and F4D sessions co-created and designed to reinforce learning outcomes and build upon each other, using experiential, participant-centred, and holistic approaches. In the third phase, youth who participated in the Hybrid Curriculum were offered social entrepreneurship opportunities through the provision of small grants to develop and implement community-based and youth-led Micro-Projects that address social risks and needs they identified in their communities. Youth were also taught how to design, develop, deliver, monitor, and report on their Micro-Projects.

In terms of outreach and impact, 202 youth were trained as YABC & F4D facilitators and accompanied 1,252 children, adolescents and young adults in their mindset and behavioural change process through the sport and educational activities of the curriculum. Across the 4 countries, more than 22,000 people were directly reached through the community-based micro-projects. Solutions to the most challenging problems of our time in the form of 72 community-based Micro-Projects² were co-created and implemented across the 4 countries, turning 'youth power' into 'community action' creating positive change in schools, families, peers, neighborhoods, and the broader world.

- **In Argentina**, the project reached 9 locations and included the construction and refurbishment of football pitches and sports venues to create community-led, safe spaces for dialogue, social cohesion, play and sports. To ensure long-term and holistic programming based on community needs, the Argentine Red Cross built key strategic partnerships with local football clubs, schools and municipalities, and integrated a special focus on Comprehensive Health, and Protection, Gender and Inclusion to educate children, youth and their parents/ caregivers, generating transformative impact at individual, family and community levels. The ARC also launched nation-wide campaigns on youth and the right to access sport through "Jugar es un Derecho".
- **In Iraq**, activities took place in 6 locations and included 24 Micro-Projects ranging from the renovation of local youth centres and football pitches to the organisation of football

and sports tournaments with a focus on inclusion of people with disabilities, climate action and reforestation activities, to cultural archaeological festivals, mobile theatre and skills-based training courses with a focus on girls' and women's empowerment. In addition, the Iraqi Red Crescent Society created their own flagship campaign "No to Drugs" to raise awareness on the dangers associated with substance abuse.

- **In Myanmar**, amidst the ongoing political crisis and complex challenges caused by it, the 21 Micro-Projects across 6 locations focused on promoting mental health and psychosocial support, gender equality; inclusive and safe access to education, culture and sports; providing safe drinking water in IDP camps, climate change action & environmental protection, as well as promoting respect for diversity and social inclusion, with a special focus on intercultural and inter-religious dialogue to prevent and mitigate violence.
- **In Uganda**, projects were targeted at reducing unemployment among young people through skill-based, vocational training and entrepreneurship opportunities, resulting in the creation of 19 micro-enterprise start-ups led by young people. Youth were trained and provided with the essential equipment to start working as bakers, hairdressers and artisans. One group focused on girls' and women's empowerment through vocational training to produce re-usable sanitary pads to distribute within the refugee settlement.

These achievements were recognised in 2021, when Peace and Sport awarded the IFRC with the 'Peace and Sport' Award in the category 'Humanitarian Organization of the Year' for its work with youth and communities through the project. The positive impacts documented at individual, interpersonal, community, and organisational levels are evidence that confirm the theory of change that was put forward and piloted in this project. It reinforces the IFRC's ambition and hope to continue leveraging and investing in the critical and unifying role, transformative power and relevance of Humanitarian Education and sport in engaging young people as agents of change in times of crisis.

2 <https://www.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/Uniting-Power-Football-Report-Projects-ANNEX.pdf>

The project was not only a life-changing experience, but in some cases also a life-saving one, as it prevented the suicide of a few youth. The results achieved are even more impressive considering the multiple and overlapping external challenges faced throughout the whole planning and implementation process: from the COVID-19 Pandemic with the subsequent restrictions of movement, closure of borders, ban on face-to-face gatherings, to the highly unstable political and social situations in some locations leading to several logistical and other challenges.

With this pilot, the following recommendations have emerged based on the data gathered through the monitoring and evaluation processes put in place. There is a strong need to:

- 1** Focus on youth-led and youth co-created approaches – The project has highlighted the value and importance of youth-led and youth co-created community-based projects, whilst preserving a space for inter-generational dialogue and solidarity. There needs to be more investment in such initiatives. In addition, there also needs to be support in building the capacity of organisations (such as National Societies) to be able to have the right eco system with policies and processes to support these initiatives.
- 2** Focus on partnership and co-creation – The project relied on partnerships at the global, national and local level all having a role in co-creation. This has to be further encouraged and promoted.

3 Expansion to other opportunities – There is a lot of potential to broaden the scope of the curriculum, project, and partnerships, expanding the YABC and football project, combining YABC with other sports, arts and other activities for future expansion, thereby engaging a more preventive and holistic approach on other needs.

4 Validation of a Sports for Development and Peace (SDP) approach – The project validates a Freirean³ model of community-based rehabilitation. Through football sessions, a tool for dialogue is set up which coupled with the classroom sessions on YABC, paves the way for looking at identifying the problem, reflecting and doing something to change the situation (through the Micro-Projects). Through the co-creation and co-leading of the projects from the community, there is a critical consciousness that is raised. The project proves this as a concept for SDP and the evidence being generated can be used to increase the knowledge, evidence base and advocacy in this area within the humanitarian sector. There is a need to strengthen the evidence-based work to support advocacy.

5 Institutionalise the model of legacy with the World Cup – The model validates a legacy component which has been vital for GA and the Qatar 2022 organisers. This project, the model and partnership can further strengthen the partnership with GA to strengthen policy advocacy on Football for Development issues and with future World Cups.

3 The Freirean model includes dialogue, conscientization, praxis, transformation, and critical consciousness for social change.

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1. CONTEXT

The challenge

The rapid changes, opportunities and challenges of our time are complex and inter-related. There are “far greater leaps in education, technology, complexity, volatility, connectivity and networks than ever before” (IFRC, 2018, p.5). The impacts of the climate crisis and the environmental degradation are a growing reality for millions of people, increasing exposure and vulnerability at alarming rates, overlapping with health threats and conflicts “driving migration and displacement at a time when compassion for people on the move is at an all-time low” (IFRC, 2018, p.5). Across the globe, there is a frightening rise in extremism, isolation, and fear. Millions of refugees, internally displaced people and stateless people have been denied access to basic rights such as education, healthcare, employment and freedom of movement.

We are losing our commitment to welcome the stranger, but also to cooperate and connect with those living close to us, we are losing our capacity to create safe spaces in our communities, welcoming diversity as an opportunity to grow and learn from one another, building more peaceful and inclusive communities together.

The COVID lockdown has disproportionately affected people’s lives, especially millions of young people worldwide, with public health restrictions and socio-economic disruptions having a devastating impact on their education, mental health, career prospects, safety, and personal development.

Initially, children, adolescents and young adults were considered less vulnerable to the virus, but developments during the pandemic have shown otherwise. A World Vision investigation (World Vision International, 2020) revealed three key factors that COVID-19 has changed in the lives of children and young people on a massive scale: school disruption, emotional distress due to social distancing and increasing poverty. The research highlighted isolation and loneliness of young people because of school closures, on top of the disruption of their learning and daily routines. In addition, there is an acknowledgement of emotional distress and troubling feelings, linked to the uncertainty about how long the crisis and imposed isolation would last and the disruptions already caused to education, livelihoods, development, safety and mental health. There is also a multi-layered impact of the COVID-19 pandemic which young

people have experienced as members of struggling families or spectators of fraught communities and states yet do not have the same recourse to support mechanisms that adults face.

As early as April 2020, the United Nations (UN) Secretary General has reported that the pandemic was turning into a child rights crisis (The Washington Post, 2020; AP News, 2020). More specifically, the 2020 UN Policy Brief on COVID-19 and children said 188 countries have imposed countrywide school closures, affecting more than 1.5 billion children and young people. It also asserted that parents of nearly 369 million children in 143 countries who rely on school meals for daily nutrition must now look to other sources. The UN estimated that at least 24 million children will drop out of school due to the pandemic (The New York Times, 2020), and UNICEF was alarmed about the pandemic potentially rolling back years of social and public health progress, for example, the reversal of the achievement of taking 94 million children out of work since 2000 (UNICEF, 2020; The Telegraph, 2020).

In addition, there is a need to address the gap in socio-emotional engagement of children brought about by the school losses. School closures have not only disrupted education, but also affected the delivery of essential services, including school feeding programmes, protection and psychosocial support, impacting the overall well-being and mental health of children and youth. Whilst reopening schools and supporting them to provide comprehensive services promoting well-being and psychosocial support is a priority there is also a need to look at other opportunities to be able to address some of these issues around mental health and related issues.

There is significant evidence that the pandemic has indeed worsened the overall mental well-being among young people (WEF, 2021) leading to higher rates of depression, anxiety, other mental health disorders and suicide. Pre-pandemic, suicide was the third most common cause of death in 15-to-19-year-olds (WHO, 2020). A 2020 Sapien Labs survey (WEF, 2021) capturing responses from people in 130 countries, reveals that the risk of young people suffering from a clinical mental health disorder varies according to geographical location and available space inside and outside homes for youth engagement including areas for play and recreation. It also reports that the size



Source: Argentine Red Cross

of the generational divide in mental well-being is “large everywhere” across the surveyed countries and that it is greatest for respondents living in Singapore, and smallest for those residing in Canada. This could have a correlation in terms of available space for youth engagement including areas of play and recreation as well as the propensity for people in Canada to have houses and gardens as opposed to staying in apartments in Singapore. To counter the repercussions on mental health in youth, the Sapien Labs report suggests lifting the measures that have led to the social isolation of young people and makes a case for sleep and exercise which are effective in boosting mental health.

The concept of remote and hybrid education, which became a necessity when the pandemic hit, provides the potential to transform the future

The opportunity

This generation of young people is ready to change the world for the better – not someday in the future – right now. They are hungry to lead and imagine innovative approaches to make their communities healthier, safer, more environmentally friendly, and more inclusive, while writing new narratives of who they are and what they are capable of.

Given the longstanding recommendations from medical professionals about the benefits of physical exercise for good mental health, coupled with the

of learning if systems are strengthened and technology is better leveraged to complement skilled and well-supported teachers. Whilst there have been some critical lessons taught by the COVID-19 crisis, the importance of transformation and innovation have indeed been enhanced.

In this regard, there are more than 1.2 billion young people¹ (UNDESA, 2020) across the globe with ideas, energy, and commitment to address the world’s most entrenched problems as well as their root causes, but they are too often dismissed or not taken seriously enough. Consequently, youths do not have sufficient access to the tools, mentors, safe spaces and other resources that would enable them to leverage their full potential, harness their creativity and co-create their engagement to turn their insights into reality.

need to engage young people as key stakeholders, there is an opportunity now to engage in identifying Sports for Development initiatives to provide good examples to authorities and policy makers in the education and health sectors. This project, among others has demonstrated the benefits of ensuring that children, adolescents and young adults are taught techniques and approaches on life skills while enjoying a physical activity, coupled with providing opportunities for community-based Micro-Projects and social entrepreneurship to help

1 Young people between the age of 15-24.

them have a better balance of mental health and social engagement.

Sport has a vital, unifying role to play in bringing people together and promoting inclusion, equality, sustainability, health, discipline, and teamwork. It can be a key catalyst towards new forms of involving and educating young people, targeting the most disadvantaged whilst creating a space for engagement and empowerment, contributing towards sustainable development and peace. Non-formal education of young people has been efficient in developing different social skills from children to young adults and above. It complements formal education and, in certain situations, even replaces it. It highly improves employability and provides exemplary experience for work, social involvement and democratic participation and understanding. Education through Sport is a pedagogical approach that uses sport and physical activity as a vehicle to spread a set of values, to develop specific competences, which can improve different fields of life. It helps

The project

The pilot project 'Uniting Through the Power of Football' integrates two initiatives into one co-created Hybrid Curriculum: the IFRC's Humanitarian Education (through the YABC component) and GA's Sport for Development and Peace (through the F4D component).

The rationale is that with these two initiatives combined, societal issues such as discrimination, exclusion, and violence can be addressed by mobilising vulnerable youth – particularly those from communities at risk of exclusion, conflict or violence, and from refugee, host, or internally displaced communities. The project concept is that these young people, when offered a space to reflect on their own personal change; empowered to lead healthy and active lifestyles through football, and when their leadership capabilities are developed, can become 'Agents of Change' driving positive transformation, peace and inclusion in their local communities.

In order to prove the validity of this concept in different contexts and time frames, the project was piloted in 4 different countries and contexts (between nine to fifteen months) and

to enhance social, cultural, moral, and ethical competencies to provide changes at personal, professional, and social levels.

We have an unprecedented opportunity to unleash the youth's passionate creativity to drive change in their communities. We need to provide the appropriate financial resources, (digital) tools, and mentorship accompaniment for young people across the globe to unleash their potential. By empowering, supporting and facilitating their desire to act, we can support and mobilise the next generation of active global citizens to create positive social change.

This is exactly what the 'Uniting through the Power of Football' project seeks to achieve: empowering youth and their communities through leveraging the critical role and transformative power of Humanitarian Education and Sport for Development and Peace trusting the capacity of young people to lead and bring positive change in their communities and around the world.

contextualised to meet local challenges and needs in Argentina, Iraq, Myanmar and Uganda, with their respective National Societies: the Argentine Red Cross (ARC), the Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS), the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS), and the Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) respectively. These countries were chosen to represent different political and geographical contexts with National Societies that have experience working in conflict settings, with refugee populations, as well as delivering football-based initiatives, and so on.

Despite the agreement for the project being signed in 2020, the implementation of the project was delayed due to the global COVID-19 lockdown measures that prevented face-to-face meetings and trainings from taking place. It was also exacerbated by local political and contextual challenges such as the political crisis in Myanmar in early 2021, which delayed much of the project roll-out in that particular context. These delays and challenges led to changes to the original project format and concept to be able to deliver the programme according to the needs, capacity, and demand from National Societies and youth.



2. ABOUT THE PARTNERS – BACKGROUND ABOUT YABC AND F4D

2.1 The IFRC, Humanitarian Education and Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change

About the IFRC

The IFRC is the world's largest humanitarian network. It is an international membership organisation that unites and supports its 192 Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, bringing together almost 15 million volunteers for the good of humanity. The IFRC acts, with independence and neutrality, before, during and after disasters and health emergencies to meet the needs and improve the lives of vulnerable people. Through local and global action, it enables healthy and safe communities, reduces vulnerabilities, improves people's resilience and promotes peace around the world. It is committed to saving lives and changing minds.

It is present in virtually every community on earth with unparalleled community-based expertise,

reaching 160 million people every year through long-term services, development programmes and disaster response, as well as working to improve global humanitarian standards and persuade leaders to act in the interests of vulnerable people (IFRC, 2022).

Humanitarian Education

Education is a fundamental human right and an essential public service. The IFRC Network strives to ensure that all people have safe and equitable access to quality, inclusive education across the world. Promoting humanitarian principles and values is central to the IFRC Network, especially when it comes to the field of education.



Source: Croce Rossa Italiana



Source: IFRC

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (“the Movement”) believes that education is crucial for individual and community resilience, youth employment and other youth related issues. It can be seen as a way out of vulnerability. Through education, young people can learn the skills and competencies which are required to find appropriate and innovative solutions for individual, community, local, national, regional and global challenges, thus creating the conditions to live a meaningful, safe and happy life.

Humanitarian Education empowers individuals to interpret situations from a humanitarian perspective, address local and global challenges and act in the spirit of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values, helping and caring for themselves and others, thereby contributing to building resilience, social inclusion and lasting peace in their families, communities and society (IFRC, 2019, 47).

It may be delivered in both formal and non-formal settings in communities around the world to create a shared understanding that enables individuals

to develop core knowledge, attitudes, skills, and understanding rooted in principles and values. It provides an enabling environment for youth – as leaders, volunteers and members of supported communities – to become agents of change, present and future leaders and decision-makers of their communities and their National Societies.



The YABC initiative

YABC is the IFRC’s flagship initiative on the promotion of a culture of non-violence and peace. Created in 2008, this initiative empowers people to take up an ethical leadership role in inspiring a positive transformation of mindsets, attitudes, and behaviours, both within themselves and their communities. It is built on three pillars: empowerment, operating from inner peace, and reaching out to the community.

YABC starts from the premise that a prior commitment to inner change and being the living example of the Movement’s seven Fundamental

Principles and their underpinning humanitarian values is critical to effectively promote non-violence and peace, enabling individuals to walk their talk and model the change they wish to see in the world. This initiative is rooted in holistic, non-cognitive ('from the heart to the mind'), participant-centred and experiential learning approaches: through games, role-plays, simulation and visualisation exercises, storytelling and internal arts, individuals raise their (self-)awareness and understanding of issues related to peace and social inclusion, and develop socio-emotional skills to interact and live together harmoniously. It is the IFRC's unique contribution to Global Citizenship Education and the development of 21st century skills, and as such, it contributes to achieving several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG target 4.7 and SDG 16.

A YABC toolkit² has been developed by members of the Movement and since its pilot test at the 3rd World Youth Meeting in June 2009, the worldwide network of YABC peer educators and trainers has been continuously expanding, now reaching over 3,700 fully trained peer educators in more than 145 countries around the globe.

The trainings delivered in Argentina, Iraq, Myanmar and Uganda as part of this pilot project do not only represent a growth in terms of YABC trained facilitators, but also an expansion in terms of content; this time the YABC has been combined with GA's F4D methodology, which uses the power of sport to positively impact lives and foster sustainable social development in vulnerable communities.



Source: IFRC

2 For more information on the YABC initiative, please visit: [Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change](#) | IFRC.

2.2 Generation Amazing, Sport for Development and Peace, and Football for Development



About Generation Amazing

GA is the human and social legacy programme of the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy, Qatar 2022, launched in 2010 during Qatar’s successful bid for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. It uses the power of sport, particularly football, to positively impact lives, especially those of youth, and foster sustainable social development in vulnerable communities. As of September 2022, GA had reached its target of 1 million young people globally having had access to activities provided by the programme.

Targeting vulnerable and displaced people, GA aims to empower a new generation of young leaders to transform their communities through football and create sustainable programmes designed to offer promising opportunities. GA focuses on building infrastructure, human potential, and sustainable programmes that improve the lives of communities.

Sport for Development and Peace

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development acknowledges sport as an important enabler of sustainable development, recognizing the growing contribution of sport to the realisation of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions that it makes to the SDGs, in particular SDG 1, SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 8, SDG 11, and SDG 16.

The popularity of sport, its capacity as a platform, its potential to set the foundation for healthy youth development and its ability to connect people, make it a development tool that can be used to meet a broad range of social and economic challenges, including promoting health and preventing disease, whilst strengthening child and youth development.



Youth participant of the YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum delivered in the Diyala Province, Iraq.

Source: IRCS

It has the potential to reach groups of people who do not usually participate in and/or have access to education, health and other essential services that contribute to the achievement of the SDGs. Football has one of the greatest potentials in reach and scope, thanks to its popularity and the fact it could be played with very minimal equipment in widely diverse contexts.



football 4 development

Football for Development

F4D is a unique concept based on the principle of fair play, equality and teamwork. It aims at bringing together groups or people from different social

and/or cultural backgrounds to foster the creation of more peaceful and thriving communities for all.

GA's F4D³ sessions follow a participant-centred approach and feature an educational twin-track approach which couples the practice of both life skills and sports skills within the context of a football game or drill. According to the F4D

working theory of change, football is used as a driver for social change: the development of youth leadership and of a social entrepreneurship spirit in vulnerable youth can improve their access to education and employment, ensure better social inclusion and build resilience in excluded at-risk communities.



Source: MRCS

3 For more information on F4D, please visit: [Football for Development \(F4D\) | Generation Amazing Foundation.](#)



3. UNPACKING THE PROJECT'S GOALS AND KEY COMPONENTS

3.1 Pilot Project Goals

The initial goals of the pilot project were set as:

- To improve social inclusion of marginalised and excluded youth (particularly those from at-risk and conflict-affected communities, refugees, and internally displaced young people, as well as in host communities), as well as address issues of identity, belonging and cultural isolation, by developing a community-based model of resilience using Humanitarian Education and Sport for Development and Peace;
- To provide life and leadership development skills, as well as learning opportunities for vulnerable and excluded young people through an integrated YABC & F4D training curriculum to empower young people to drive change on the ground;
- To actively engage and equip youth with individual socio-emotional life skills and behavioural change faculties (i.e., active listening, empathy, critical thinking, non-judgement, non-violent communication) through YABC & F4D, and to empower them to contribute to reducing violence in at-risk communities and promoting peace and inclusion (i.e., respect for diversity, intercultural and interreligious dialogue, gender equality, etc.);
- To inspire youth and their communities to lead healthy and active lifestyles and enhance their physical and psychosocial well-being through the provision of non-formal education, physical activity, football skills, sport opportunities, and psychosocial support;
- To inculcate social entrepreneurship thinking in young people by providing them with small grants to develop and implement social change projects that address social risks and identified needs within their local communities, teaching them how to carry out and report on a project;
- To strengthen National Societies' capacity to sustainably deliver non-formal peace education in communities through youth engagement and peer-to-peer approaches such as YABC & F4D, as well as to improve dissemination of key messages regarding respect for diversity, human dignity and equality.



3.2 The Project's Main Phases

The project was conceptualized and delivered in the following phases (with considerations taken to address challenges brought about by the pandemic lockdowns and also other political crises).



3.2.1 Phase 1 – Inception

As part of the proposed roll-out plan, an inception phase in each implementing country was introduced to ensure the contextualisation of the project, and the further defining of its scope and theory of change at country level.

Activities conducted as part of the inception phase were:

- Co-development of contextualised project proposals for each country, together with National Society project teams, based on a needs assessment carried out by the National Societies that included:
 - full engagement and participation of National Society local branches in the identification of the most vulnerable contexts and communities;
 - meetings and dialogue with community members;
 - development of partnership cooperation frameworks with local stakeholders;
- Identification of YABC trainers and their ‘online coaching’ on: F4D; new YABC (digital) sessions;

newly developed sessions & activities integrated in the training on ‘Protection, Gender and Inclusion’ (PGI) minimum standards in emergencies, the IFRC Child Safeguarding Policy, Psychosocial Support (PSS) & Psychological First Aid (PFA), and Project Cycle Management (PCM);

- Identification and selection of YABC & F4D facilitators (youth, volunteers and staff from National Societies) according to selection criteria developed and provided by the IFRC and GA project teams based on the respective YABC & F4D initiatives standard requirements (such as peer education, facilitation and communication skills; previous experience in the National Society with youth engagement, volunteering, YABC or football; as well as gender and cultural diversity, etc.);
- Development, adaptation, translation, finalisation and/or digitalisation of training material, project budget and proposal development templates, communication and branding guidelines, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) guidelines, framework, tools, etc.

BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES THROUGH FOOTBALL

The **working theory of change** for this programme is (see figure below):

By using football as an impetus for social change (FSC); engaging in youth leadership development and social entrepreneurship to mobilise vulnerable

and at-risk communities; we can contribute to preventing the onset of violence; ensuring better social inclusion and building the resilience of at-risk marginalized communities; leading to healthy lifestyles, improved engagement, reduced peer problems and enhanced prosocial behaviour.



3.2.2 Phase 2 – The YABC & F4D Training of Facilitators

In this phase, 25-34 selected youth in each of the 4 countries participated in a Training of Facilitators (ToF) over 6-12 days. They were trained in YABC & F4D toolkits and methodology to build their capacity to deliver the Hybrid Curriculum comprising of 24 YABC & F4D activities to 264 youth afterwards. The ToF equipped the young facilitators with key competencies enabling them to effectively facilitate the curriculum activities, to be role models in applying, embodying and practicing interpersonal skills developed during the ToF, to inspire behavioural change in them and in their communities.

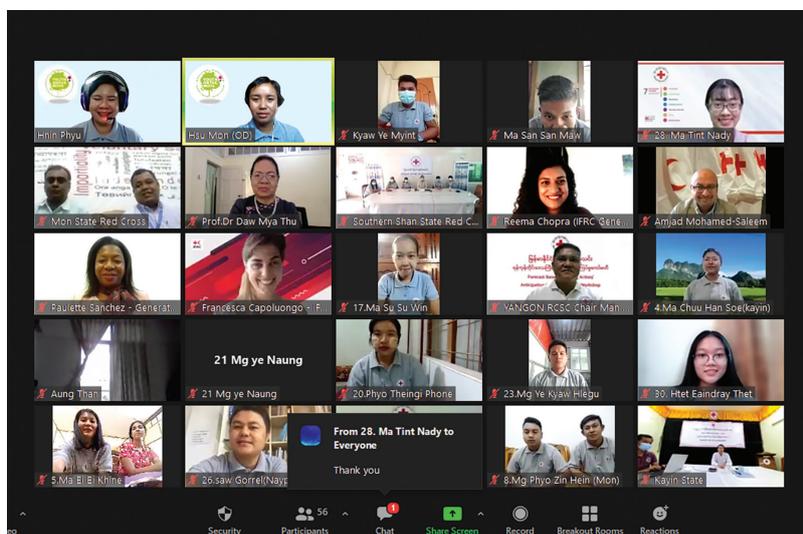
Through this training – facilitated by international and national trainers from the Red Cross Red Crescent YABC network of trainers who were provided online coaching on F4D methodology and new integrated content – participants engaged in a self-reflection and self-transformation process, which resulted in their enhanced confidence, commitment and ability to act as ethical leaders fostering respect for diversity, gender equality, intercultural dialogue, social inclusion and peace (see section 4.2. for more information on the training impacts).

All the skills learned in the ToF, in particular mediation and negotiation, resulted very useful for them managing the youth teams and supporting participants in overcoming the divisions and struggles internal to the team and the community."

YABC & F4D Facilitator from Myanmar.

ToF Key Objectives and Expected Outcomes for Future Facilitators:

- Developed capacity to confidently implement the methodology and content of the 24 YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum activities with the 264 selected youth (460 in Argentina), as well as use and adapt these materials to their context and target audiences, and within the actions carried out by their National Society, while ensuring global consistency with the (multi-) country project plan and objectives;
- Deepened knowledge of the fundamental notions related to youth and adult learning, more specifically peer education, facilitation and communication techniques and the affective and experiential learning approach, in order to be able to take them into account and put them into practice when conducting sessions related to the YABC & F4D initiatives in their National Society and respective communities, enabling them to:
 - Sustainably use these activities in different settings, for various purposes and with diverse target audiences (e.g., National Society staff and volunteers, local authorities, sports clubs, migrants, refugees & Internally Displaced People (IDPs), community leaders and members, minority ethnic groups, family, friends, etc.);
 - Integrate the YABC & F4D initiatives within their National Society programmes as a way to further promote a culture of non-violence and peace amongst their peers and communities;



Online Training of Facilitators closing ceremony in Myanmar.

Source: MRCS



Online Training of Facilitators in Argentina.

Source: ARC

- Strengthened socio-emotional life skills (i.e., active listening, empathy, critical thinking, dropping bias, non-judgement, non-violent communication, collaborative negotiation, and mediation) and techniques to foster personal resilience and operate from inner peace (e.g., Qi-Gong, meditation), to enable them to disseminate and act upon them in their daily life and Red Cross Red Crescent work, and especially, in the face of discrimination, exclusion and/or violence, to:
 - (re-)act positively and constructively to prevent or mitigate it;
 - manage their stress and emotions, and be attentive/re-active to those of others;
 - role-model a positive change of mindset, attitude and behaviour towards respect for diversity, social inclusion and peace, and thereby inspire others to follow suit;
- Enhanced awareness and understanding of issues related to the promotion of a culture of non-violence and peace (especially non-discrimination and respect for diversity, intercultural dialogue, social inclusion, gender, and violence prevention, mitigation and response), and ability to describe and promote humanitarian principles and values, provide basic PSS and PFA as needed, as well as to ensure PGI minimum standards and Child Safeguarding mechanisms throughout the pilot project cycle;
- Support participants with the exploration and development of creative platforms/tools

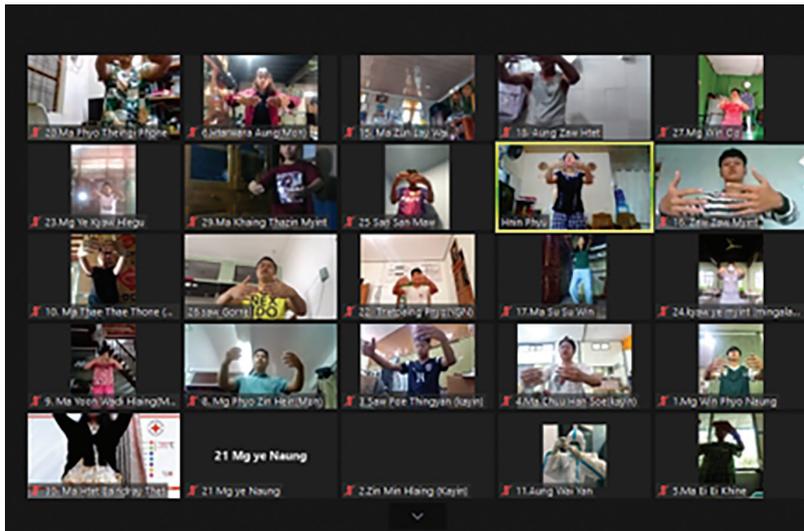
for community engagement, such as music, theatre, dance, sports and visual arts, to reach out to, sensitise and mobilise their peers in their communities and branches to engage in building a peaceful and inclusive society;

- Strengthened YABC peer educator network in each country, turning young people into ethical leaders and role models for their families, peers, and communities.

Methodology:

The training was conducted based on participant-centred, experiential and affective learning approach combining individual and group exercises, football games, as well as role-plays and simulations. The training drew from the holistic approach and materials of the YABC & F4D initiatives – with plenary and small group discussions to allow for greater interaction among participants and to carry out various activities and sessions to encompass the different topics, within a safe space for self-appraisal, reflection, tolerance and mutual understanding. Participants themselves delivered almost 50% of the course, allowing them to practice their peer education skills while familiarising themselves with the content and methodology of the YABC & F4D initiatives.

The trainings' learning methodology focused on participants' leadership, motivation, feelings and experience. Moreover, emphasis was placed on the importance of using inspiration and creativity, thinking critically and exchanging views, consolidating friendship ties, and committing



MRCS facilitators practising Qi-Gong every morning as part of the YABC inner peace module, October 2021.

Source: MRCS

oneself to inner change. To support the latter, participants and facilitators practiced Qi-Gong every day in relevant scenarios, as part of the “Operating from inner peace” module.

Digitalisation, Development and Co-creation of Different Training Models:

Depending on the context due to COVID-19 related travel restrictions and/or the security concerns derived by the political instability, the ToF was delivered either face-to-face (Iraq, Uganda) or online (Argentina, Myanmar). The duration varied between 6, 8 and 12 days: the 6-day model is based on and inspired by the standard YABC face-to-face agenda, while the 8- and 12-day agendas are more flexible and innovative models that were developed for online delivery and adapted to the specific contexts and needs.

Through an iterative process, initial proposed models developed prior to the implementation were fine-tuned, continuously re-adapted and on occasion entirely re-envisioned and re-designed in both structure and methodology during the project implementation in 2021. This continuous development and co-creation process, managed by the IFRC project team in close consultation with National Societies and YABC trainers, was crucial to consider the most optimal pedagogical approaches based on the context and to integrate feedback from the initial pilot-testing in Argentina to make the online training experience as relevant and effective as can be in such a setting.

Although a digitalisation process was initiated for some YABC activities and theoretical sessions in the second half of 2020 to adapt to COVID-19 related challenges, the full digitalisation process was

YABC activity on non-violent communication during Training of Facilitators in Iraq.

Source: IRCS





YABC activity on personal resilience during the Training of Facilitators in Kampala, Uganda.

Source: URCS

implemented in 2021 under very tight timeframes for the purpose of this project. This allowed the project to meet certain unforeseen circumstances such as in the case of Argentina when the borders were closed a few days before the planned start of the face-to-face training and hence all the training had to be delivered entirely online. Each specific agenda session, its materials and approaches were urgently digitalised and translated in parallel to the project implementation itself to have all contents and methodology adapted to the online setting.

Additional coaching and support were provided to the trainers' team on the new digital methodology,

requiring adaptations to be tested for the first time. After this initial pilot-test in Argentina, further re-envisioning and modifications were made, incorporating the suggested improvements and feedback for the ToF that was also subsequently conducted online in Myanmar due to the political crisis and COVID-19. A YABC & F4D peer-to-peer support, exchange and coaching mechanism was also put in place to continuously accompany the YABC trainers' team who were experiencing online facilitation and management of group dynamics for the first time.

3.2.3 Phase 3 – The YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum: A Transformational Combination Empowering Youth with Socio-Emotional Life Skills

Over the course of 2020, as part of the project inception and development phase, prior to the project implementation kick-off, the IFRC and GA technical teams & experts came together to develop and co-create the YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum and also to adapt it to the conditions of the pandemic which warranted more virtual training. The curriculum entails 12 modules, each comprising of 1 YABC and 1 F4D activity (24 activities in total). In the first half of 2021, the Hybrid Curriculum was finalised, together with the creation of additional guiding documents, visuals, tools, and facilitation tips and techniques for each activity.

In this phase of the project, the trained YABC & F4D facilitators delivered the Hybrid Curriculum to 264-460 youth over a period of 1-2 months in most cases. Through the curriculum, the youth

participants increased their self-awareness, self-confidence, and personal commitment. They were equipped with socio-emotional and life skills – such as active listening, empathy, non-judgement, critical thinking, personal resilience, non-violent communication, collaborative negotiation and mediation – as well as inspired to lead healthy and active lifestyles.

This phase corresponded to the transformative learning and inner change process that allowed youth to first embody the humanitarian & sport values – such as respect for diversity, open-mindedness, intercultural dialogue, discipline, teamwork, patience, and compassion – before transmitting them to others, including through the creation of Micro-Projects in the following phase to drive positive change in their communities.

YABC activity on critical thinking and non-judgement as part of the YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum implemented in Al-Jabayes, Dhi Qar branch, Iraq.

Source: IRCS



You could literally see the change in the children: while initially they were often violent with each other, they gradually learnt to respect and share with their peers - at the beginning there was no way they would share the ball, especially boys towards girls. But the gender roles were transformed and now you see them playing together in and outside the football pitch. What is more, the psychologist of the neighbourhood's school told us that also the cases of bullying have decreased since the implementation of these activities - it is incredible."

YABC & F4D Facilitator from Argentina.

Each YABC & F4D activity forming a module has been designed and combined in such a way that aims to reinforce their respective learning outcomes and to easily build on each other regardless of whether the youth participate first in the YABC or in the F4D session.

According to the specific contextual needs, the delivery model was adapted into alternative timetables, as follows:

- 12-week implementation model: one YABC & F4D module per week (recommended model to allow sufficient time to digest, integrate and reflect on key learnings and apply them in daily life before moving to the next level/skill)

- 8-week implementation model: 1-2 YABC & F4D module(s) per week
- 4-week implementation model: 3 YABC & F4D modules per week
- 2-week condensed implementation model: 6 YABC & F4D modules per week
- 10 days condensed implementation model
- 5 months implementation model with additional educational sessions on PGI and Comprehensive Health (ARC).

During weekends, the groups participated in (optional) friendly football tournaments to foster the team building process and reinforce the non-formal education process through informal moments of sharing. This represented an additional opportunity, time and safe space, for each team to come together, share and reflect on their journey so far.

Facilitation teams and continuous accompaniment:

In principle, each YABC & F4D activity was delivered by at least two fully trained people (with an optional roving support of one trained volunteer). Each group of 44 youth was accompanied by the same team of 4-5 trained facilitators; with for example, two facilitators delivering the YABC sessions while the other two facilitators delivered the F4D components. The main facilitators accompanying a group remained the same over

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION MODEL

Table 1: Proposed Implementation Model for the Hybrid Curriculum

| | |
|---|---|
| NUMBER OF YOUTH PARTICIPANTS | 264 youth in Iraq, Myanmar and Uganda (460 children, youth and their parents/ caregivers in Argentina) |
| NUMBER OF YOUTH PER GROUP (6 GROUPS) | 44 youth Divided into 2 sub-groups of 22 participants to limit the number of participants in each session and ensure adequate facilitator/ participant ratios, an essential element for the pedagogical approaches. |
| NUMBER OF YABC MODULES | 12 modules each comprised of 1 YABC & 1 F4D session covering specific skills/thematic issues. Some National Societies built in additional sessions on PGI and Comprehensive Health (ARC) and integrated PSS (MRCS). |
| MODALITY | <p>Within each module, the 2 sub-groups worked on the same personal skill or thematic issue at different timings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sub-group 1 participated in the YABC activity (classroom session) while sub-group 2 participated in the F4D activity (football pitch session) • after the completion of the activities, the sub-groups would switch spaces/sessions (sub-group 1 to F4D, sub-group 2 to YABC). |

the full implementation period to ensure stability, trust-building, management of group dynamics for generating behavioural change, continuity, and needs-based accompaniment of the youth.

With each group of 44 followed by a team of 4 facilitators (minimum), a total of 24 facilitators (at least) was required to complete this project's pilot phase for 264 youth.

Weekend friendly football tournament in Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement, Uganda.

Source: URCS



3.2.4 Phase 4 – Community-Based Micro-Projects: Developing the Social Entrepreneurship Spirit

After completing their training through the Hybrid Curriculum and experiencing personal transformation at the level of their mindsets and behaviours, the youth were given an opportunity to understand how to develop their social entrepreneurship spirit, as well as their project management and leadership skills, through the provision of small grants to create and implement community-based Micro-Projects. They were accompanied by the National Society staff and volunteers, as well as the YABC & F4D facilitators, in assessing the needs of their communities and designing, developing, and implementing Micro-Projects to address the problems and risks identified. Through these micro grants and their active engagement at community level, the youth were encouraged to give back to their communities and to apply what they had learnt in the classroom and on the football pitch through concrete social action, creating an external ripple of change.

In this phase, youth were generally working together in teams of 11 (the Hybrid Curriculum sub-groups of 22 were further divided into 2, matching the teams of the friendly football matches), and in some cases, remained in teams of 22 depending on the context. This reduced number was to ensure the active participation and contribution by each team member and a conducting team dynamic for the design and implementation of the Micro-Projects.

Youth were accompanied through proposal writing workshops and training on project management, including needs assessments; planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting; budgeting and financial skills; creative platforms for community engagement (using dance, music, theatre, visual arts, etc.); as well as guidance on how to improve the visibility and communications aspects of their projects.

The youth teams were strongly encouraged to be innovative, think outside the box, and integrate a holistic approach whereby the issues, risks and identified needs are considered from multiple angles. They were also encouraged to reflect on the sustainability of their projects and the involvement of local partners and stakeholders.



Solutions to the most challenging problems of their time in the form of 72 community-based Micro-Projects in total were

co-created and implemented by the young people in the 4 countries, creating positive change in their schools, families, and neighbourhoods, as well as connecting with several SDGs, in particular:

- **Goal 1** – No Poverty: End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- **Goal 2** – Zero Hunger: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- **Goal 3** – Good health and well-being: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all, at all ages
- **Goal 4** – Quality Education: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- **Goal 5** – Gender Equality: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- **Goal 6** – Clean Water and Sanitation: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- **Goal 8** – Decent work and economic growth: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- **Goal 10** – Reduced inequalities: Reduce inequality within and among countries
- **Goal 11** – Sustainable cities and communities: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- **Goal 13** – Climate Action: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- **Goal 16** – Peace, justice and strong institutions: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
- **Goal 17** – Partnerships for the Goals: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.



Refurbishment and construction of football pitches to create community-led, safe spaces for sport, education and dialogue.

Source: ARC

In Argentina, the Micro-Projects were implemented in 8 locations, including in remote Indigenous communities, and included the construction and refurbishment of football pitches and sports venues to create community-led, safe spaces for dialogue, social cohesion, play and sports, while learning key socio-emotional life skills. To ensure long-term and holistic programming based on community needs, ARC built key strategic partnerships with local football clubs, schools and municipalities, and integrated sessions on First Aid, sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence prevention, physical and mental health, nutrition, and parenting skills, generating transformative impact at individual, family and com-

munity levels. The ARC also launched nation-wide campaigns on youth and the right to access sport through "Jugar es un Derecho" (play is a right).

In Iraq, activities took place in 6 locations and included 24 Micro-Projects ranging from the renovation of local youth centres and football pitches, to the organisation of football and sports tournaments with a focus on inclusion of people with disabilities, to cultural archaeological festivals and innovation conferences, climate action and reforestation activities, mobile theatre and skills-based training courses with a focus on girls' and women's empowerment. In addition, the IRCS created their own flagship campaign "No to Drugs"

Awareness tours in markets to educate and raise young people's awareness of the risks associated with drug abuse as part of the "No to Drugs" campaign in Iraq.

Source: IRCS



Health, nutrition and access to safe drinking water in IDP camps as part of one Micro-Project in Shan State, Myanmar.

Source: MRCS



to raise awareness and educate youth and the local community- on the dangers associated with drug use and its negative impacts on health, well-being, and societal issues.

In Myanmar, amidst the ongoing crisis and complex challenges, the 21 Micro-Projects across 6 locations focused on promoting mental health and psychosocial support, gender equality; inclusive and safe access to education, culture and sports (including through the fencing of a school, refurbishment of a library, and provision of educational stationery items for disadvantaged children/youth); providing safe drinking water in IDP camps, climate change action & environmental protection through campaigns and awareness-raising sessions, as well as promoting respect for diversity and social inclusion, with a special focus on intercultural and inter-religious dialogue to reduce existing tensions and prevent violence.

In Uganda, projects were targeted at reducing unemployment among young people through skill-based training and entrepreneurship opportunities, resulting in the creation of 19 micro-enterprise start-ups led by young people. The youth served by the Micro-Projects (mainly refugees, out-of-school youth, unemployed youth and sex workers) were trained and provided with the essential equipment to start working as bakers, hairdressers, artisans producing crafts, liquid and bar soap, eco-friendly paper bags, craft shoes and concrete bricks. One group focused on girls' and women's empowerment, coupling educational activities on sanitation and menstrual hygiene management with vocational training to produce re-usable sanitary pads to distribute within the refugee settlement.



URCS volunteer with a community member delivering an electric oven to a refugee settlement as part of a Micro-Project.

Source: URCS

“With this project, the Red Cross has channelled the energy of the youth into development, they are doing skills training and they have supported them with a lot of start-up equipment. This is helping us (government representatives running the refugee camp) a lot: when youth are engaged in positive activities and especially income-generating activities, there’s a decrease in crime rates. Many organisations have brought livelihood programmes into the settlement but never targeting the youth, which have a lot of energies and resources but have been forgotten for so long.”

Government Officer in the Rhino camp, Uganda.

“It is difficult to describe in words what it means for our community to have had recovered our space. Our club has whole families that come to play, fathers, mothers and children. While before there were many conflicts within our community, neighbours didn’t know each other, today they have the club’s space as the one thing they have in common, as a reference point. We were able to bring the community together behind this one common goal to have a space that serves not only as a football club but as a space of transformation of the everyday reality of our children and their families.”

Nicolas Pedersoli, Manager of City Bell Football Club.

3.2.5 Phase 5 – Monitoring and Evaluation

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) component of the project is central to verifying the overall proof of concept of the project and model, since it allows it to be anchored in data and figures, as well as insightful qualitative feedback. For this reason, an M&E, and lessons learnt collection process, was established to ensure holistic project learning and reporting. To support this process, a set of tools and guidance documents were developed and designed to be tested, adapted, and used by the National Societies. The IFRC project team provided support to the national project teams in the process of adapting and contextualising the tools to the specific needs along the implementation process to establish a unified, and yet, contextualised M&E system.

Since the first scoping study part of the initial multi-country proposal development and based on previous experiences of SDP/behavioural change programmes, both internal and external to the Movement, it was recognised that the impact of such interventions can be more difficult to measure and evaluate due to their focus on social and psychological change triggered by non-formal education and sport.

To address such limitations, the M&E approach built upon and adapted existing tools and practices from the YABC programme, combining the use of traditional and standardised tools (such as pre- and post- self-assessment questionnaires, focus group discussions, interviews, feedback forms, etc.) with alternative, innovative and

creative tools (e.g., photo and drawing journaling, drawing one’s own ‘Tree Mirror’ to reflect and track one’s journey and personal growth, Micro-Project video storytelling and photography, etc.). This mixed-method, creative approach was chosen to fill potential gaps in the data collected and to appraise the project from different perspectives, capturing insights from all stakeholders involved in the different project phases in a truly participatory manner. Moreover, some of the creative methodologies were proposed not only to help monitor and consequently evaluate the achieved change in knowledge, mindset, and behaviour, but also as additional psychosocial and personal development tools for both facilitators and participants involved in the project.

Here is a list of all final M&E tools and guidance documents that were developed throughout different project implementation phases and to capture impact and learnings at different levels:

- **M&E tools at Facilitator level:**
 - Training of Facilitators Final Evaluation Form
 - Facilitators’ Feedback on Hybrid Curriculum Contents and Methodology
 - Reflective Journaling: A Tool for Facilitators during YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum & Micro-Project Implementation
- **M&E tools at Participant Level:**
 - Registration Form

- The Pre- and Post- Self-Assessment Questionnaire
- Weekly Photo/Drawing Journaling: M&E tool for YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum (this tool invited participants to draw or take a picture on a weekly basis of a particular moment, scene or symbol that: a) depicted what was discussed/learnt during the weekly sessions; b) made them further aware of and reflect on what was discussed in the YABC & F4D sessions)
- My Tree Mirror: M&E tool for Hybrid Curriculum & Micro-projects Implementation (from the YABC toolkit, Activity 29). This tool invited participants to externalize and draw the vision they have of themselves in the form of a tree, by identifying and symbolically representing different aspects of their selves/lives: roots (representing what keeps them rooted, foundations, origins), trunk (what makes them grow, motivations, skills, values), branches (inner and outer connections), leaves and fruits (what are their achievements, contributions to the world). They were asked to update their Tree Mirrors at different points in the implementation and record the evolution. This tool also served as a PSS tool as participants could go back to it whenever feeling lost or confused about themselves.

- **M&E tools for the Community-Based Micro-Projects – at Participant, Facilitator, and National Society levels**

- Micro-Project Guidance & Planning Tool:
 - o Micro-Project Planning Support Document (to support youth teams to develop their Micro-Projects plans)
 - o Micro-Projects Summary Table (to have a high-level overview of all Micro-Project plans per National Society)
- Micro-Project Impact Reporting form for youth teams
- Micro-Project Storytelling Videos and Photos
- Interview & Testimonies Questionnaire Guidance: at participant, facilitator, community, National Society project teams and leadership levels.

Throughout the project implementation, M&E meetings, field visits and workshops also took place as most appropriate to the specific context of implementation. All National Societies maintained constant communications and organised several coaching/support/monitoring sessions with facilitators and branches, further strengthening the National Society Development component of the project. As set out in the initial M&E plans, the IFRC project team intended to conduct project visits in each country of implementation. However, due to COVID-related restrictions and political issues, the IFRC was able to organise only two field missions: one in Uganda (April 2021) and one in Argentina (May 2021), with a focus on M&E and documentation, as well as providing strategic and technical guidance on project integration and sustainability. In addition, the IFRC project team, with the support of the Regional and Country Offices, has been holding regular online meetings and/or coaching sessions to accompany National Societies throughout the whole duration of the project cycle, from its inception, implementation, and reporting (January 2021 – May 2022).

By using the Tree Mirror and reflecting on my achievements, I realised that there are no big or small successes, even the smallest achievements are valuable and significant, and I should be grateful for them all."

MRCs YABC & F4D facilitator.

The below graphs and photos are examples of the results that were collected through the above-mentioned M&E tools.

The first two graphs show the result collected through the 'Pre- and Post- Self-Assessment Questionnaire' that all participants filled in at i) the start of the Hybrid Curriculum and ii) at the end of the Hybrid Curriculum, to show changes in the mindsets and attitudes of participants after having participated in the YABC & F4D activities. The Self-Assessment questionnaires were filled in anonymously and collected by the National Society project staff – either using hardcopies or Kobo Toolbox, an online data collection tool (depending on local preferences/needs).

When facing difficulties in life, I put things into perspective and take this as an opportunity to learn, grow and be able to overcome the problem/get up and reach further next time.

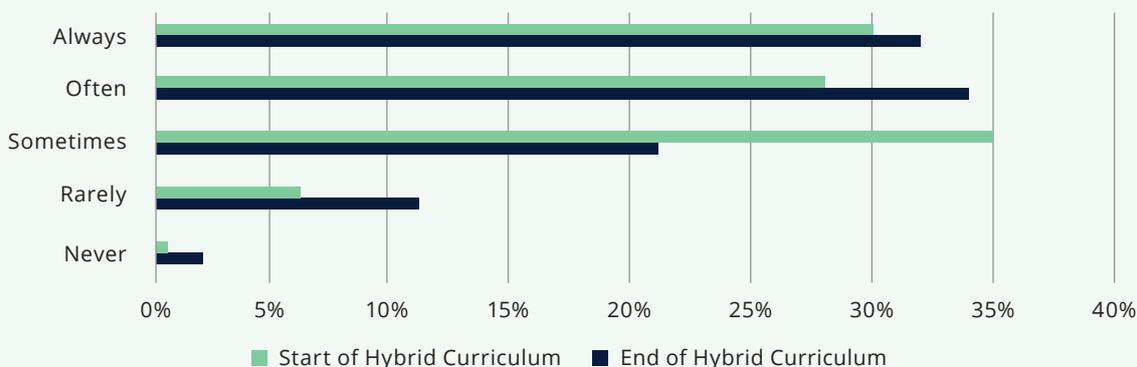


FIGURE 2: This graph represents the attitude-change of participants in Myanmar regarding their personal resilience. There was a reduction in the percentage of people who tended to never or rarely put things into perspective when facing difficulties in life, to now seeing these as opportunities to learn and grow, correlating to the increase in the percentage of people who would do so sometimes. The decrease in the ‘always’ and ‘often’ replies could be associated with an increase in the self-awareness and self-reflection attitude in participants, which may explain participants distancing themselves from an affirmative/firm stance, where they recognise that there is room for improvement.

People of different ethnic origins should be able to live in peace together.

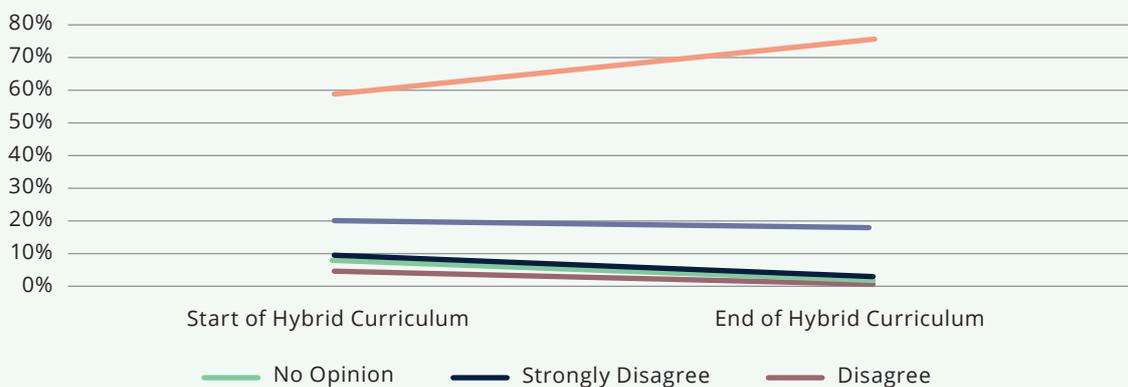
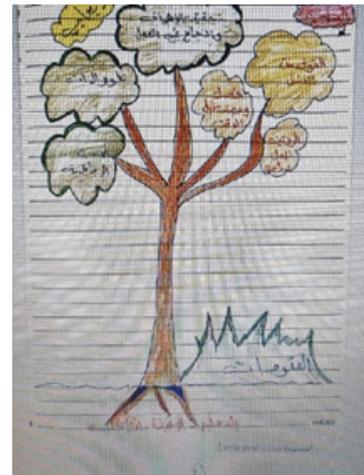
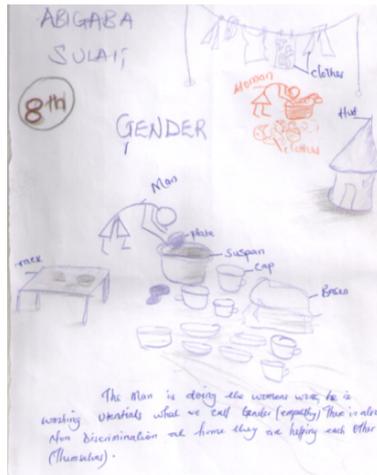


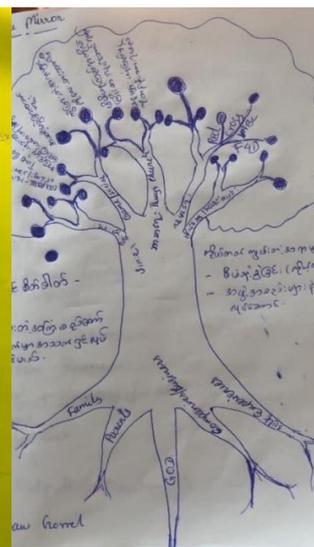
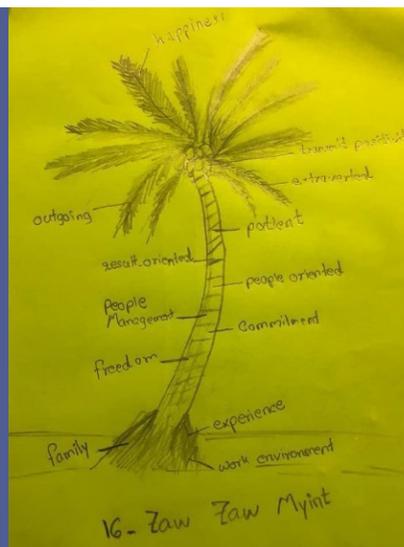
FIGURE 3: URCS participants showed a significant increase in their positive attitude towards the idea and possibility of having different ethnic groups living together. On the one hand, the percentage of people against and having no opinion on the matter decreased from the start to the end of the Hybrid Curriculum. On the other hand, the percentage of those strongly agreeing with a peaceful coexistence increased from 59% to 76%.



Examples of participants' Drawing Journaling, Arua, Uganda.

Example of a participant's Tree Mirror, Iraq

Examples of participants' Tree Mirror, Myanmar



Examples of participant's Tree Mirrors, Uganda

3.3 Integration of Policies, Procedures and Approaches

National Society Development

One of IFRC's priorities, as outlined in its Strategy 2030, is to improve the ability of all National Societies to support vulnerable communities and to fulfil their full potential as effective local humanitarian actors. Thanks to their networks of local branches, RCRC National Societies are present in communities in virtually every country on earth and reach people others cannot. Branches bring communities and volunteers together: they allow National Societies to be present in communities, ensuring the work is grounded with the needs of those communities in mind, they function as centres of resilience.

The "Uniting through the Power of Football" project included a strong National Society Development component, in particular through Branch and Volunteering Development. National Society branches were tasked to play a key role throughout the whole project: from officially overseeing its implementation to ensure a localised approach, as well as institutionalising the ownership of the project (such with the Supervisory Committee in

Myanmar formed by Branch managers and focal points) to the key role played in the partnership development and Micro-Projects implementation (with the ARC branches being a paradigmatic example of such involvement).

According to the tailored approach of National Society Development support, it has been up to each National Society to identify its needs and how to best leverage the pilot project to foster their branches and volunteering development. Volunteering and Youth Development was one of the core elements of the pilot project: the very fact of having RCRC youth volunteers trained as YABC & F4D facilitators and being fully involved in the whole project management cycle constitutes a strong model of engagement for volunteers and youth. Similarly, some practices such as the training on the Child Safeguarding policy, the registration process, provision of comprehensive insurance coverage with, in some cases, specific attention to the mental health of the volunteers through PSS expert support, were integrated also with the aim of enhancing volunteering management systems and practices.



Trust-building and community resilience activities involving children, parents/caregivers and elderly conducted by ARC volunteers in the Salta branch, Argentina.

Source: ARC

Moreover, **PGI and Child Safeguarding policies, processes and/or measures** were integrated in all phases of the project. PGI is an approach to ensure people's dignity, access, participation, and safety – reaching those that need it most with relevant and effective aid, whilst ensuring a do no harm approach is maintained. PGI was at the centre of the project, embedded in essence in its objectives throughout its phases given the issues addressed and related skills developed. For that purpose, a PGI session, including Child Safeguarding, PSS and PFA elements, was also developed and integrated into the ToF, on which the international/national trainers and facilitators were coached.

Community Engagement and Accountability

(CEA) is the process of and commitment to listen to and act on community needs and feedback, provide information as aid, support behavioural and social change communication, as well as support communities to speak out. CEA helps to put communities at the centre of what we do, and, in the case of this pilot project, CEA has been a core component of the entire planning and implementation process. National Society branches and volunteers have been in constant contact with communities, including through the youth participants of the Hybrid Curriculum and Micro-Projects coming from the most vulnerable communities. Community members and community leaders, other than the youth participants have also been constantly consulted for the identification of community needs and actively involved in the development and implementation of the Micro-Projects.

This was for example the case in Phalaung and Thetkalchin villages in Myanmar with children, parents, and elderly community members eagerly contributing to the refurbishment of the village library and fencing of the communal school. Another example was ensuring the participation of Somali girls in the Hybrid Curriculum by engaging the United Somali Community Leadership and youth in dialogues and consultation on how they could participate in football and YABC activities while still wearing their cultural and religious dress.

The results of effective CEA processes were also particularly evident in the case of Argentina, where some communities

“ were used to being promised so much but seeing so little, if anything at all – they did not trust organisations and were not used to reflecting on their own needs was difficult for them to immediately identify what could have been improved in their communities. Through a long, and at times challenging, process of active involvement and accompaniment, community members started to reflect and express their needs and trust was gradually built.”

Luciana, National Youth Coordinator, Organisational Development, ARC.

Sharing information and listening to people's feedback and concerns improved the programmes, created stronger accountability and helped build trust between the organisation and communities and among community members themselves.



Source: ARC



4. KEY OUTCOMES – REACH AND IMPACT

4.1 Quantitative Impact

The data collected during the pilot project demonstrates clearly that the project was very well received by National Societies and their local branches, partners, external stakeholders, and communities alike. Despite facing many unique country-specific challenges, each National

Society has successfully completed the project implementation in the identified locations and communities. The delivery model and timescales have been adapted based on the local context, whilst keeping the essence of the project unchanged.

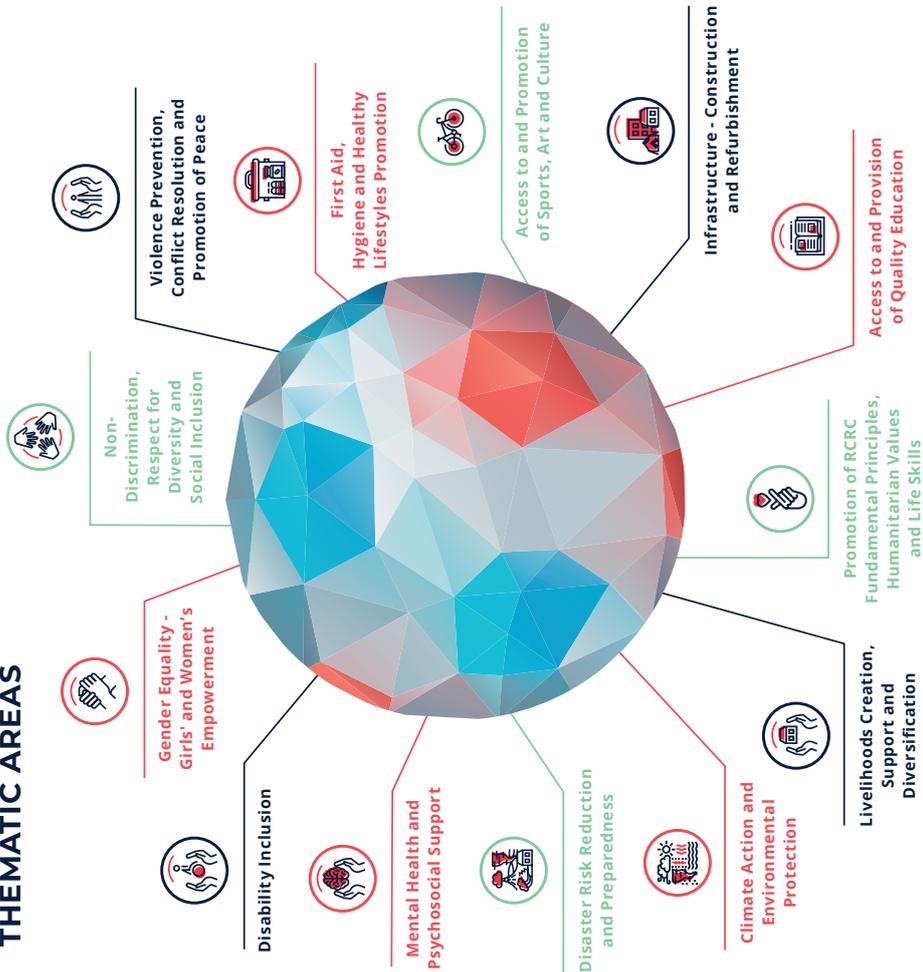


Participants developing their Micro-Projects based on identified community needs during the ideation workshop in Rhino Refugee Camp, Arua District, Uganda.

Source: URCS

UNITING THROUGH THE POWER OF FOOTBALL + CIFRC

THEMATIC AREAS



OUTCOMES

Locations **24**

International trainers and peer educators
9 YABC Trainers / 3 YABC peer educators / 4 Football United coaches
16

Facilitators identified, selected, and trained in YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum
186

Participants taking part in the Hybrid Curriculum
1,252

Youth-led and Community-Based Micro-Projects
72

Number of people directly reached through Micro-Projects
22,227



THE IFRC WAS AWARDED THE PEACE AND SPORT AWARD 2021 IN THE 'HUMANITARIAN ORGANISATION OF THE YEAR' CATEGORY FOR THE UNITING THROUGH THE POWER OF FOOTBALL PROJECT- DELIVERED WITH RED CROSS RED CRESCENT NATIONAL SOCIETIES AND IN PARTNERSHIP WITH GENERATION AMAZING.

The award recognizes an NGO or a humanitarian organization that invests in sport as an educational and social tool for sustainable peace and has demonstrated its capacity to involve local stakeholders.



4.2 Qualitative Impact

4.2.1 Key Outcomes of the Training of Facilitators

The following points reflect the assessment and outcomes of both the training sessions and the YABC & F4D materials, representing the key trends from the responses to the individual evaluation form filled in by facilitators from Argentina, Myanmar and Uganda⁴, at the end of the course.

Facilitators effectively developed their ability to engage in facilitation and peer education of the YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum, especially thanks to the daily 'theoretical' sessions in the morning such as those focused on peer education, facilitation and communication, where key concepts, tips and techniques were provided. The practical sessions, as well as the extensive feedback and coaching/counselling provided to them in this framework, were seen as very beneficial for the facilitators to effectively carry out their role in this regard:

- Facilitators enhanced their knowledge of the YABC & F4D initiatives (concept, spirit, methodology, and related content) and strengthened their socio-emotional skills (including awareness of their importance and key components), especially through the combination of peer education with the active use of the YABC & F4D methodology and activities.
- Facilitators significantly improved their self-confidence, self-esteem and motivation, and strengthened their personal values (mutual respect and trust, open-mindedness, cooperation, teamwork, ethical leadership, etc.). The overall learning process behind the training agenda and the theoretical session on 'skills and personal development' significantly contributed to this achievement.
- Facilitators acquired practical tools to enhance their personal resilience, mental health and inner peace, further their self-awareness, and better manage tensions, traumas, stress and emotions in their daily lives. This was attributed in part to the one-to-one interactions, including psychosocial support (webinars and expert counselling in the case of MRCS), personal empowerment and meditation

sessions (increased in some contexts upon daily requests from participants) and the daily morning Qi-Gong practice.

- Facilitators highly benefited from and gained extensive practical learning through meeting (and living with) each other, sharing and working (online/face-to-face) together for at least one week, and in some instances across a month. They developed strong friendship ties and a strong peer-to-peer support group.
- It strengthened the collaboration and relationships between people from different branches, areas of work, backgrounds and ethnicities, and increased their sense of connection and belonging to their National Society and the RCRC Movement.
- From the whole training process, facilitators developed the insight that their critical self-analysis, self-questioning attitude, as well as a commitment to continuous learning and self-improvement are the foundational elements for becoming a successful Agent of Behavioural Change and an effective facilitator and peer educator.
- Facilitators increased their understanding of how to engage their peers and communities – through role-modelling – to actively take part in the YABC & F4D to promote a culture of non-violence and peace.

Most interesting, meaningful and/or engaging course elements:

- The YABC toolkit and F4D materials (i.e., activities, role-plays, football games, energisers, meditation, Qi-Gong, etc.), as practical, transferable and interactive tools that can be easily related and practiced in day-to-day life. They induce important and influential learning experiences and foster the living and practical application of the humanitarian principles and values through the development of socio-emotional skills and a greater understanding of issues related to a culture of peace.

⁴ The ToF evaluation report was not received from the trainers delivering the training in Iraq.

- The spirit, objectives and content of the YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum as a relevant and powerful initiative to build individual's capacity to engage in a process of inner change and then inspire a positive transformation of mindsets, attitudes and behaviours amongst their peers.
- The ability to use football and other sports as a tool for community/youth development and engagement, which can be used alongside or embedded into projects and programmes to maximise engagement and bring communities together.
- The pedagogical approach and methodology ("from heart to mind" and "learning by doing" - experiential and affective learning, combined with facilitation/peer education), as an innovative and effective way to actively engage participants in practical (self-)reflections, rich discussion and actionable points on the issues addressed.
- The theoretical sessions (especially peer education, facilitation, communication, motivation and the newly developed session on PGI, Child Safeguarding and PSS/PFA) combined with practical sessions during which participants were given the opportunity to further familiarise themselves with the YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum activities and practice their facilitation skills while receiving specific guidance and constructive feedback from the team of experienced trainers.
- The conducive learning environment made it easy to work together in groups and to freely express opinions and feelings, share ideas, knowledge and experiences on an equal level, and therefore explore others' way of thinking and start self-reflection.

- The components of developing inner peace, through morning Qi-gong exercises and especially the evening meditation, were highly appreciated by facilitators as it helped them to relax, improve their ability to further focus on their objectives and develop other skills such as critical thinking and active listening.

Statistical evaluation

Overall, very positive feedback was received regarding the immediate impact and relevance of the YABC & F4D facilitators' training in all 4 countries. 100% of all facilitators across Argentina, Myanmar and Uganda⁵, would recommend the YABC & F4D Training of Facilitators to others as it provided them with very rich and interesting information about YABC & F4D, enabled them to experience the power of a holistic, non-cognitive, and experiential learning approach (i.e., collaborative learning through feelings, action and sharing), and gave them the opportunity to find out and reflect on the impact of their perceptions on their actions.

Facilitators also highlighted that they gained important knowledge on the seven Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and developed essential socio-emotional life skills (i.e., know-how) which they can apply in their daily lives. Finally, they defined the YABC & F4D learning experience as one of the most effective and relevant in life: it brought many positive changes in themselves, equipped them with concrete tools to take up their responsibility as ethical leaders and motivated them to act as role-models and positive thinkers in their communities towards building a culture of non-violence and peace.

The following charts are based on statistical data gathered from facilitators' individual assessments. They show the increase in the level of knowledge in different areas measured through pre- and post-training self-assessment questionnaires, rated between 0% (none) to 100% (all).

5 This data is missing for the ToF in Iraq, as the evaluation report was not received.

Level of knowledge (pre and post-training knowledge self-assessment, rated between 0% (none) to 100% (all)):

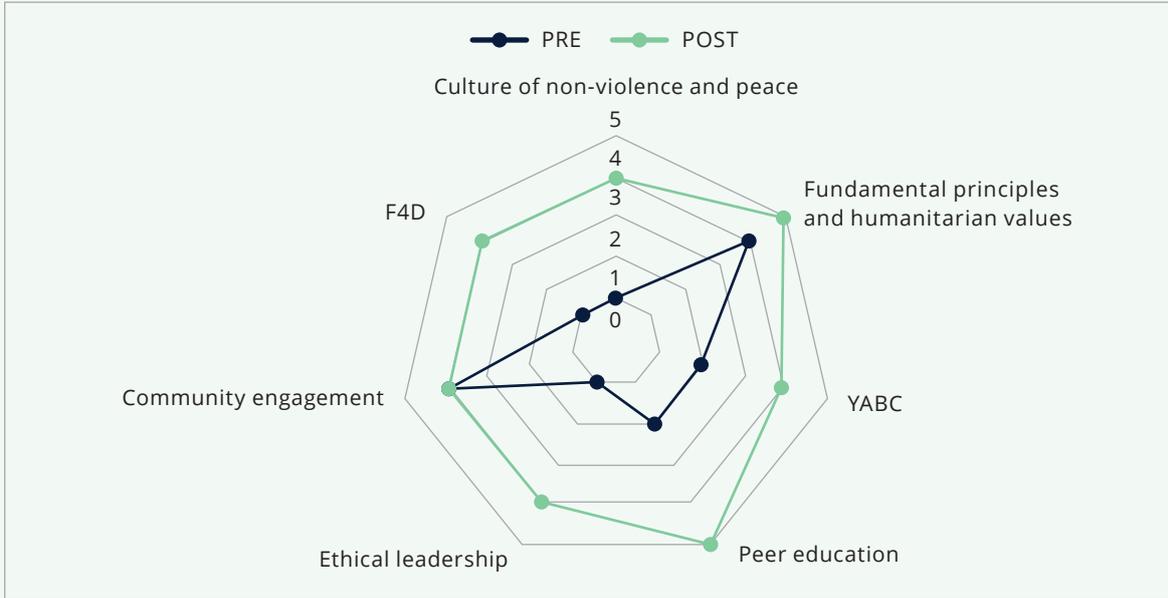


FIGURE 4: Pre- and post- levels of knowledge for facilitators, Argentina ToF.

Level of knowledge (pre and post-training knowledge self-assessment, rated between 0% (none) to 100% (all)):

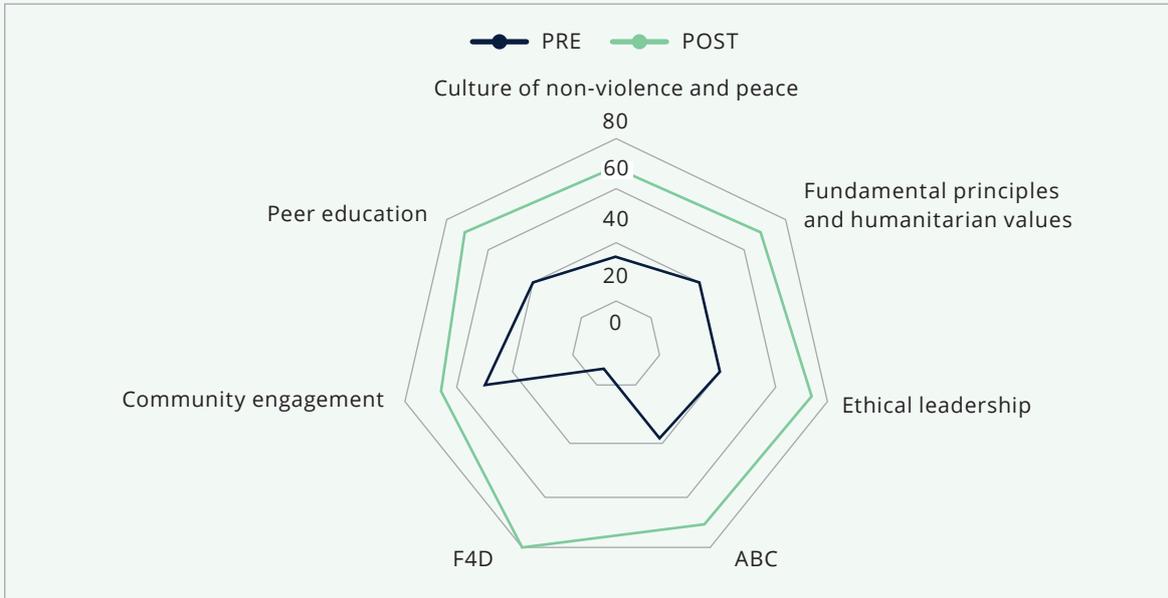


FIGURE 5: Pre- and post- levels of knowledge for facilitators, Myanmar ToF.



FIGURE 6: Pre- and post- levels of knowledge for facilitators, Uganda ToF.

Overall, and although the interrelation of all project phases (ToF, Hybrid Curriculum, Micro-Projects) was highlighted to be key, a majority of facilitators across all contexts expressed during

the final evaluation workshops and focused group discussions/interviews that **the ToF was for them the most rewarding and transformative phase of this pilot project on a personal level.**



Source: MRCS

Voices from YABC & F4D Facilitators:

"I liked learning about new tools and skills that we already had inside ourselves, but that we had not yet discovered until this training, showing us that we can all contribute to a culture of non-violence and peace using F4D and creative tools to begin to generate a change in behaviour through listening, dialogue and cultural exchange."

Facilitator, Argentina

"I experienced a lot from the training, and it was first of its kind to me. Now I have the knowledge to transform the youth within the community without fear and I do everything with a lot of confidence."

Facilitator, Uganda

"What I experienced from the training was the experiential method used. My life is changed from root; I have unlearned the learned negative attitude."

Facilitator, Uganda

"The ToF was transformative, because after the active listening and empathy activities, I try to listen to others even when I am not necessarily interested; it made my change the way I listen to others."

Facilitator, Myanmar

"I got experience on how to change from negative to positive coping mechanism!"

Facilitator, Uganda

As I am part of the LGBT community, I can tell you that my journey has been very tough in my community. This YABC & F4D toolkit make me believe in myself and it encourages me to find ways to help other people in my environment."

Facilitator, Myanmar

I now feel so confident when I interact with my fellow youth in my community, and we generate solutions to our problems together."

Facilitator, Uganda

The first day of the training was difficult as I had no idea of how this training goes. My entire learning experience so far was a 'one way' (top down) teaching, but this YABC & F4D training methodology gave me a chance to communicate better with others and with myself."

Facilitator, Myanmar

I value the learning environment that was created for us within the training which I have never ever experienced before"

Facilitator, Myanmar

I have also seen a change in my life and can now stand for myself and believe that it's possible to change the community and whole world with YABC."

Facilitator, Uganda

I am so grateful for having you as a facilitator for this training. Never in any other training did I feel so confident and free to speak my mind. Thank you very much. You rock."

Facilitator, Argentina

"The information and tools we were given to be able to serve as facilitators in our community were quite clear and easy to implement."

Facilitator, Argentina

"The YABC & F4D toolkits inspire me to find out what is inside me, and I would love to also create such toolkits on my own if I have the chance to do so."

Facilitator, Myanmar

"I liked all the topics discussed during this month. Using football as a mainstay, resorting to different games and dynamics to make it more entertaining and meaningful. Then, learning more about both personal and social human values (communication, self-love), to find out that eventually everything comes together to provide a better vision of the world, and thus see the work that still needs to be done."

Facilitator, Argentina

"The training showed me that youths can teach themselves through triggering self-transformation amongst participants that result in positive and lasting changes of mindsets, attitudes and behaviours."

Facilitator, Uganda

"Throughout this training you managed to transmit your energy to us through the tools and the learning process. Thank you for making me feel part of it. Today I am a different person and that's because of you."

Facilitator, Argentina

4.2.2 Key Outcomes of the YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum

The following points reflect the assessment and outcomes of the YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum, representing most of the replies to the self-assessment tool, individual testimonies collected during interviews, the final evaluation workshops, and in-person focus group discussions conducted at the end of the project implementation by National Societies and IFRC:

- The power of the Hybrid Curriculum relied on both its YABC and its F4D components; both initiatives were important in the process of change and complemented each other by reinforcing the respective learning outcomes.
- The F4D (and Sport for Development and Peace in general) was often highlighted as a great 'entry point' – it has the power and immense potential to attract and engage youth and communities, whilst teaching key life skills and values by engaging the body in physical movement and holistic approaches. Whereas YABC was more often highlighted for its deeper transformative impact and power for inducing mindset and behavioural change, for increasing self-awareness, and developing socio-emotional awareness, self-confidence, and life skills.
- **For facilitators**, the Hybrid Curriculum implementation represented a valuable opportunity to put into practice what they had learnt during the ToF and for 'learning by doing'. It allowed them to gain more confidence and experience in leadership, mentoring, facilitation and peer education, including in providing psychosocial support. Facilitators developed the capacity to use and adapt the methodology and content of the 24 activities in the curriculum to their context, especially when having to adapt from a digital to face-to-face setting and delivery (Myanmar, Argentina), and for much younger target groups (Argentina). This reflection and adaptation process, together with the ongoing coaching support provided, further strengthened their capacity to sustainably use these activities in different settings, for various purposes and with diverse target audiences.
- **For the youth participants**, the most rewarding and transformative phase of the project on a personal level was the Hybrid Curriculum, corresponding to their own 'starting point' in the project.
- Through the participation in the Hybrid Curriculum, the participants:
 - Familiarised themselves with the YABC & F4D initiatives and developed their socio-emotional life skills, such as active listening, empathy, non-judgement, critical thinking, non-violent communication, collaborative negotiation, and teamwork, enabling them to role model a positive transformation of mindsets, attitudes and behaviours towards respect for diversity, social inclusion and peace. Thereby inspiring others (peers, family members, etc.) to follow suit and drive change in their communities. For instance, there has been a visible decrease in bullying and violence in some schools where youth participants were enrolled as a result of these activities;
 - Improved their overall mental health and well-being, through the enhancement of their personal resilience, self-esteem and their self-awareness, to better manage tensions, traumas, stress and emotions in their daily lives, in particular thanks to the expert PSS provided in some contexts;
 - Enhanced their understanding of societal issues such as discrimination, exclusion, gender inequality and violence, and developed their capacity, confidence, motivation and agency to address these issues by (re-) acting positively and constructively to prevent or mitigate them, including by striving to embody humanitarian principles and values;
 - Built a solid community of peers, support groups and friendship ties, which contributed to a sense of belonging, purpose, human connection, hope for the future and in their ability to be changemakers in their communities. This was helpful to reduce feelings of isolation and mental health issues.
- **Community-level:**
 - In the specific case of Argentina, the inter-generational approach to the Hybrid Curriculum brought some specific and notable benefits (complemented by additional educational sessions on PGI and Comprehensive Health education), including:

- strengthening parenting skills, awareness, including self-awareness, knowledge and understanding (non-violent communication, open-mindedness & respect for diversity, health & nutrition, emotional management, etc.). Parents immensely benefitted from being part of this learning experience, which helped them improve themselves as more conscious parents, naturally also positively impacting the home environment of children and youth – a basis and pre-requisite for broader peace;
- notably reducing the levels of violence, increasing respect for diversity and gender equality, giving opportunities and hope for a better future, and for

uniting entire families and communities around personal development, sport, and educational activities. As a result, this not only transformed mindsets and behaviours at the individual level, but also transformed entire community dynamics.

- Communities were involved in weekly/regular friendly football matches, with an observed reduction of violence on the pitch and more sharing of the ball throughout the lifespan of the curriculum between diverse groups (ethnic, gender, etc.). These friendly matches were also crucial for community engagement and awareness-raising of the positive impact of the project.



Voices and reflections on the Hybrid Curriculum

This curriculum is really working among all these youth and is very, very effective. Each and every participant and facilitator is really inspired and can also apply all these learnings in their body and mind. I can observe their body language, their behaviour, and their eyes - especially the expression in their eyes - I can assess how much they have changed their behaviour from the inside, in their inner world.

I myself am really inspired by this programme and hopefully we can continue this project for youth in coming years to help community, peace building, and building youth personal resilience."

Dr Lynn Lynn Thet, Director of Organisational Development Department, Myanmar Red Cross Society

This project was really necessary before the pandemic, and became even more necessary afterwards, with all that is going on around the world, and these anguishing moments with the pandemic that increases inequality gaps in all countries. This project that we started dreaming about a few years ago is now in such an advanced execution stage as a symbol of hope here in Argentina.

I was in a refugee camp not long ago in Europe and I could see how those that came from isolation played football and were able to integrate themselves with the host communities. In a country like Argentina - that breathes and lives football - this project is really being very well welcomed by all the communities."

Diego Tipping, President of the Argentine Red Cross

Through football matches, there has been promotion of togetherness, team, friendship, collaborative negotiations, and dialogue in cases of any misunderstanding in their communities."

Ssemakula Vicent, Uganda Red Cross Society

“By transforming the attitudes and aptitudes of these young people through sports, they're going to be able to be the change for their partners, their colleagues and families, and spread everything that they are learning through this beautiful project that enables us to develop through sports.”

Amparo Mrak,
YABC & F4D
Facilitator and
Volunteer from
San Juan Branch,
Argentina

“As a Facilitator and young person, I feel empowered to address challenges in my community and being a teacher by profession, I am integrating the skills and ready to support schools with YABC & F4D skills since it was one of the recommendations by stakeholders during the Inception meetings.

I am a facilitator based in Rhino camp refugee settlement, an area that has mostly refugees from South Sudan and The Democratic Republic of Congo. Here in the camp, out of 5 games in a week, at least 3 end up into fights and sometimes even calling police to help. But we see the community embracing co-existence as a result of YABC sessions. We have organized 9 games with both participants and communities which ended peacefully with handshakes. Community members could be seen hanging banners of peace during football games, a sign of positive change.”

Innocent Iguma, YABC & F4D Facilitator,
Uganda

“During the first 3-4 days of the training some of my behaviour already started to change. I deduced that these activities we conducted during the training could change my life because the main benefit is motivating one's mindset towards respecting everyone and non-discrimination. As I'm from the LGBT community I do feel depressed, discriminated, not matured, neglected, and left out by others.

Afterwards, when I got to engage in the Hybrid Curriculum as one of the facilitators, we have some participants who are LGBT like me, and at first, they had an inferiority com-

plex, fear, embarrassment. I tried my best to change and encourage them to have confidence in themselves and eliminate the discrimination against gender through the activities and games. Just like me, they gained confidence and knowledge about gender-based discrimination, helping each other not to see the negative things among themselves anymore. There are many positive outcomes from this training, we were able to change ourselves as well as gain confidence and motivation.”

San San Maw, YABC & F4D Facilitator,
Myanmar

4.2.3 Key Outcomes of the Micro-Projects – Impact at Community-Level

The following points reflect key trends, outcomes, and impact at community level from the Micro-Projects, representing testimonies collected during interviews with facilitators, community members, strategic partners and key stakeholders, as well as with the National Society staff and volunteers:

- The Micro-Project phase represented a moment for youth to translate the learnings and insights gained during the Hybrid Curriculum into concrete actions. It was seen as an opportunity for the youth, who had the chance to participate and benefit from the Hybrid Curriculum, to give back to their communities by inspiring and driving change, further building on their own transformational learning;
- By being engaged in the co-creation and implementation of Micro-Projects through the development of their leadership and social entrepreneurship skills, youth were provided with opportunities to harness their energy and invest their time in something positive for themselves and their communities. This provided them with a sense of motivation, purpose, involvement/belonging, and has been a catalyst for them to come together and work together as a team towards a common goal. Such youth engagement activity significantly reduced their exposure to violence and risky behaviours, such as alcohol and substance abuse;
- There has been a visible, positive change in the community dynamics resulting from the Micro-Projects implementation and the overall project process. This improvement was concretely seen through reduced fighting and violence, and the increased respect and dialogue among people from diverse cultures, religions, generations, genders, abilities, etc., overall contributing to social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace, and thereby to multiple SDGs, in particular SDG 5 and 16;
- National Societies and facilitators accompanying the youth in the design, implementation and reporting process have gained/strengthened crucial skills and experience in this field, which could in turn result in the creation of additional, similar types of Micro-Projects in the future, as well as lead to knowledge transfer and capacity-building;
- The fact that National Society branches developed local, strategic partnerships and collaborated with key stakeholders for the Micro-Projects' implementation contributed to increased opportunities for sustainability and partnerships, thereby further strengthening National Society Development;
- The action-oriented component of the Micro-Projects, and the overall development/comprehensive approach of combining the Hybrid Curriculum with social entrepreneurship opportunities, contributed to deepening communities' trust in the Red Cross Red Crescent, as well as between the National Societies and its volunteers;
- Through the thematic issues and skills developed in the Hybrid Curriculum, combined with the design and implementation of Micro-Projects, this pilot project has contributed to several SDGs, especially SDG 1, SDG 2, SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 6, SDG 8, SDG 10, SDG 11, SDG 13, SDG 16, and SDG 17.

4.2.4 Impact on National Society Development: Strengthened Branch, Youth and Volunteering Development and Collaboration

The following points reflect the overall and key impact of the project on National Society Development:

- **Between headquarters and branches:** the project contributed to fostering collaboration and built additional trust between Headquarters and branches, empowering the latter with leading roles in implementation;
- **Between branches:** the collaboration between different National Society branches

working together for this project was fostered through sharing of human resources, best practices and experience;

- **Between branches and communities:** the project allowed the relevant branches to connect with communities in which they were not active before, thus reaching more vulnerable communities and broadening their services in the area;
- **Between National Societies and their volunteers:** the project helped National Societies to further develop and structure their volunteering services, with a strong focus on safety and security (provision of insurance for volunteers, focus on their mental health throughout the project, etc.), policies and training (Child Safeguarding, Fundamental Principles and

humanitarian values, PGI, etc.), and selection/ registration processes, which put a strong attention on diversity and inclusion. In addition, this project contributed to institutionalising and promoting volunteers/youth engagement at local level, both in terms of development programmes and in terms of recognising the capacity of youth to play a key role in the planning and delivery of complex projects;

- **Between volunteers and other community members:** the strong and continuous involvement of volunteers on the ground for a certain period contributed to increasing the trust and fostering the collaboration between RCRC volunteers and other members of the communities.



Source: IFRC



5. COUNTRY IMPLEMENTATION AND STORIES OF IMPACT

5.1 Argentina

CASE STUDY

June 2022

UNITING THROUGH THE POWER OF FOOTBALL IN ARGENTINA



ARGENTINA

PROJECT INFORMATION

Locations

— **9**

Córdoba, Corrientes, La Plata, Mar del Plata, Saavedra, Salta Base Camp, San Juan, Santiago del Estero, Villa Crespo

Implementation Period

— **15 months**

February 2021 – April 2022

Trainers

— **2**

YABC trainers from the Costa Rican Red Cross coached online on YABC & F4D sessions, tools & methodology

Facilitators

— **90**

25 facilitators completed the YABC & F4D online Training of Facilitators and transferred the knowledge to 65 support facilitators

Participants

— **460**

children and youth between 5 to 18 years old as well as their parents/ caregivers, residing in communities that are in a situation of vulnerability and/or structural exclusion, participated in the YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum and additional educational sessions

Micro-Projects

— **8**

community-based Micro-Projects were successfully implemented in parallel to the Hybrid Curriculum

People Reached

— **9,410**

community members directly served and reached through the Micro-Projects, including 2,000 members of Indigenous Communities. In addition, more than 900'000 people were reached through the 'Jugar es un Derecho' campaign.



Football represents a strong component of the Argentinian identity. The *Juventud en Movimiento: Deporte e Inclusión* pilot project implemented by the Argentine Red Cross and its strategic partners demonstrated in practice the great potential of football to provide hope and opportunity, foster integration and reinforce community bonds. The overall project not only transformed people at the individual level — by enhancing their active listening, empathy, non-violent communication, and critical thinking skills — but **transformed entire community dynamics, breathing new life into neighborhoods.**

Micro-Projects Thematic Areas



Country Overview



General Context

In the Southern Cone region of Latin America, Argentina has high levels of poverty with about 45 per cent of people living under the poverty line.⁶ A predominantly young population coupled with **highly populated urban areas, political volatility, economic instability** and changing socio-demographic structures exacerbate the existing vulnerabilities and contribute to **higher rates of violence**, including gender-based violence, which is an increasing concern in the region⁷. This juncture is only aggravated by high levels of **inequality and exclusion**, as well as the lack of access to basic services, including healthcare.

With regards to health, **non-communicable diseases** such as cancer, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases are the most common. Other concerning issues among youth include widespread **alcohol and psychoactive substances abuse, gender disparities and domestic violence, unintentional teenage pregnancies, as well as mental health concerns**, which are often left unaddressed, including depression, anxiety and suicide – a major cause of death among young people aged 10 to 19 years old⁸.

The Covid-19 Pandemic and its Impact on the Project

In order to effectively contain the spread of the virus, one of the world's longest lockdowns was imposed in Argentina, with a severe impact on its economy and society. The prolonged closure of schools, businesses and public spaces **increased social inequality** and significantly increased the rate of young people dropping out of school.⁹

Due to the health emergency and the associated restrictions, all phases of the pilot project were subject to some degree of adaptation: the Training of Facilitators had to be **rapidly digitalized and delivered online** instead of in person, delays occurred in the procurement and transportation of the materials for the Micro-Projects' implementation and the budget had to be constantly re-adapted due to **inflation** exacerbated by the pandemic.

6 IFRC Regional Plan for Southern Cone and Brazil in 2021, 2021, p.2. Link: https://www.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/2021-08/Southern_Cone_Plan_2021.pdf

7 Lopez,O. Thomson Reuters Foundation. Femicides in Argentina reach 10-year high under coronavirus lockdown, 2020. Link: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-women-trfn-idUSKBN22V05H>

8 Ibid., 2021

9 Ibid., 2021

Project Implementation Overview

Inception and Training of Facilitators (ToF)

The Argentine Red Cross strategically chose to pilot the project among vulnerable and excluded communities that were often unfamiliar with Red Cross Red Crescent services, especially in the field of youth development. In addition to the selection of the implementation locations, the inception phase focused on the **identification of local, strategic partners and building strong collaboration with stakeholders**.

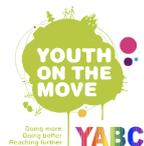
In May 2021, the ToF was delivered online over 8 days by 2 YABC trainers from the Costa Rican Red Cross, becoming the first global pilot of a YABC & F4D online training. The trainers received specific coaching from the IFRC and GA on F4D, new YABC digital activities, and on additional sessions and tools related to Project Cycle Management; Protection, Gender and Inclusion; Psychosocial Support and First Aid; and Child Safeguarding policy and practices. The core team of 25 YABC & F4D facilitators that were initially trained, then transferred their knowledge to **65 additional youth** through in-person meeting and practice of YABC & F4D activities, for them to act as 'support facilitators' in the delivery of the Hybrid Curriculum.



Online Training of Facilitators delivered by YABC trainers from the Costa Rican Red Cross in May 2021.

Source: ARC

Hybrid Curriculum and Community-Based Micro-Projects Implementation



A distinctive trait of the pilot project in Argentina was the **parallel implementation of the Hybrid Curriculum and the Micro-Projects phases, involving entire families and communities**. Based on the needs identified and expressed by the communities themselves, additional sessions/workshops were integrated with a **specific focus on First Aid, Sexual and Reproductive Health Education, Prevention of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), Holistic Health Promotion including Nutrition and Mental Health, Adolescent Suicide Prevention, Conflict Resolution, and Parenting skills**. Among the YABC & F4D activities, a focus was put on those addressing non-discrimination and violence prevention given the high rate of intra and intergroup violence present in some communities and identified by the community. Due to the very young age of some participants, the facilitators constantly adapted the Hybrid Curriculum to ensure a positive and effective impact on the children, whilst ensuring integration of child safeguarding policy and practice.

The 8 community-based Micro-Projects were decided by and with communities in collaboration with local partners, as well as aligned with the long-term strategy and vision of ARC. The planning of the Micro-Projects served as an opportunity to build solid relations and trust with the community, and ensure the involvement of the children, youth, and their families in the curriculum. The Micro-Projects focused on the refurbishment of infrastructure for the promotion of safe access to sports and quality education. **The aim was to improve and create safe spaces for community engagement in physical and educational activities, to reduce violence, and enhance social cohesion, inclusion, dialogue and quality of life.** The creation of these community-led recreational spaces helped in

“removing the invisibility cloak from those communities and neighbourhoods that used to be forgotten.”

Nahuel Saleme, YABC & F4D Facilitator from La Plata.



Hybrid Curriculum and Micro-Projects Parallel Implementation

Source: ARC



This parallel implementation modality ensured the successful delivery of the overall project as the creation of safe spaces and conducive learning environments (which were otherwise non-existent or not fit for purpose) was an **essential pre-requisite** to run deeply transformative educational and sport activities with 460 individuals.

Project Monitoring and Evaluation

ARC constantly supported and accompanied the youth and branches involved in planning and implementation through regular online and/or in-person meetings. A field visit by the Costa Rican YABC trainers was conducted in January 2022 to strengthen the capacity of the facilitators and to support the transfer of knowledge to youth from other branches. During an IFRC monitoring and documentation visit from Geneva in May 2022, several **evaluation focus group discussions** were held to collect feedback and testimonies of children, youth, families, community leaders, local stakeholders and strategic partners, ARC facilitators and staff.



Highlights of the Project

“Before, we were meeting at the supermarket and not even greeting each other. There were divisions in the neighbourhood, which was dead, while now it’s back to life. Now we are together, we are a team!”

Rocio, trainer of the female team of Defensores de City Bell football club, La Plata



- **Intergenerational Approach, Holistic Programming & Transformation at Community Level:** As a result of the needs-based community approach, a **strong Protection, Gender and Inclusion & Comprehensive Health Promotion approach** was integrated in the curriculum through additional sessions targeting **parents, caregivers, teachers and trainers**. Parents recognised the profound impact the workshops had on them, making them more calm, open-minded and conscious parents. Positive change was also observed at the entire community level, as demonstrated by families (including mothers) playing football together in the revitalised clubs, the reduction in violence, and strengthened gender equality and inclusion among youth;

“now, male and female youth are not only playing together on the football pitch but mixing up and talking to each other outside the pitch – before they remained separate.”

explained Nadia, a mother of 2 girls involved in the project in Villa de Mayo neighbourhood.

- **Engagement of Indigenous Communities:** In the humanitarian camp in Salta Province, the activities were integrated into a broader humanitarian and development intervention supporting **34 Indigenous Communities**. This complemented and strengthened the existing actions aiming at providing access to safe water, sanitation, and health services, creating and improving livelihoods, **reducing ethnic divides and (domestic) violence, as well as promoting gender equality, intercultural dialogue and inclusion** among the different communities living in the territory, bringing them together and co-creating a strong bond and space of trust.
- **Key Local Partnerships:** A key ingredient of the project's success in Argentina was ARC's **long-term, integrated and multi-sectoral programming and approach**. ARC engaged with and worked alongside several local, strategic partners: **community leaders, local municipalities and NGOs, schools and teachers, police, health care and sports managers, sports associations and local football clubs**. These partnerships resulted in several formal agreements for the long-term use of public space for educational and sports activities. Engaging with local stakeholders was part of the wider strategy to extend humanitarian support to a broader population, **ensuring sustainability of the project** through its integration into existing local programmes – such as the “Valores en la Cancha” (i.e., “Values in the Football Pitch”) project developed and delivered by ‘River Plate Foundation’ – **one of the most popular football clubs in Argentina**.
- **Communications Campaigns:** ARC organised strong communications and awareness-raising campaigns and launched viral challenges on social media **reaching more than 900,000 people** across the entire country and beyond with the tag **#JugarEsUnDerecho** (i.e., “To play is a Right”).¹⁰ The key messages focused on the promotion of a culture of non-violence, peace and inclusion, the positive role of youth and sport, as well as the **right to play and access sport and education**. This effectively contributed to engaging the communities involved in the project as well as a broader audience.
- **Branch, Youth & Volunteering Development:** *Juventud en Movimiento: Deporte e Inclusión* was the **first externally funded youth project at a national scale for ARC**. The youth volunteers played a key role in the whole project management cycle acquiring new capacities and expertise. The **ARC National Youth Commission** were engaged in strategic planning to integrate the YABC & F4D methodology and activities in other youth programmes to foster peer-to-peer exchange at branch level. **ARC branches not yet involved in the project have expressed a strong desire for future engagement** in a potential second cycle and are already planning to implement the YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum to revitalise and strengthen their youth programmes.

Reaching more than
900,000
people

¹⁰ Find out more information on the “Jugar es un Derecho” Campaign here: <https://youtu.be/bGj7eSsdzc8>

VOICES FROM THE PITCH

“ After the flooding that happened in 2018, our Indigenous Community here in the Salta Province was strongly and negatively impacted. Our houses were destroyed, our animals died and many of our people lost everything they had. So, when the Red Cross came to help us by providing clean water and helping with other problems, we were grateful. What makes the difference is that the Red Cross has integrated into our community, they came and stayed here with us. They are here when we need them.

We are really thankful for the new community health clinic; they take care of our health issues and facilitate transportation to the hospitals for the more serious cases. Other things that we have worked together with the ARC has been things like nutrition, health of the community, helping parents with new skills, addressing issues of violence between men and women. And now there are also these activities for the kids who are happy to learn and play, earlier they were doing nothing. ”

'Caciques' (Community Leader in Wichi language) Gabriel Mendoza, from Quebrachal.



Caciques Gabriel Mendoza, Community Leader from Quebrachal and a Mother & Community Member from Santa Maria

Source: ARC

“ As a mother, I can say that our children are always a big concern for us. We were scared for their safety from violent people and animal attacks; they could not walk around by themselves at night, it was very dangerous. The construction of the football pitch here in Santa Maria, and its lighting, brought safety to our community: the space is illuminated in the evening and our children are safer. ”

A reassured mother in Santa Maria, referencing the project.

“ I see this new area (the pitch) as a space for gathering for everyone. Now we see our ('Indigenous') children playing together with 'Criollos' children (from white/European descent) while before they did not use to mix. It is good to see that our children can play together and overcome any division. Our older children can now come and play in the evening, they channel their energy and use their free time here instead of being exposed to violence and getting trapped into dangerous habits/risky behaviours, like drug and alcohol abuse. The Project has given us a broad and safe space to be, so thank you to the Red Cross. ”

'Caciques' and Community Pastor Sarmiento Eduardo, from Santa Maria.



“ Participating in the educational workshops positively changed my way of behaving as a mother: I am calmer and more understanding in the way I interact with my children and learned to cook delicious, healthier meals. I am also more open-minded; I can now accept and truly respect diverse gender identities and sexual orientations. ”

Nadia, a mother from Villa de Mayo.

“ Our children are challenging the more conservative aspects of our thinking and helping us see things in a different way. ”

Gabriela, another mother.

“ As facilitators what we have seen has been a real change in attitude, a growing respect between children, especially towards girls. This project allowed for an equal opportunity space to be given between boys and girls, which has positively impacted women’s confidence in the community. Here we have a big discrepancy in opportunities between boys and girls; usually girls are made to grow up too fast, they have added responsibilities to take care of their younger siblings, as well as high numbers of teen pregnancies. One of our group of trainees mentioned their dreams for the future: “we would like to create a team for the girls, we did not play football before, it was only for the boys – we would like to create our own team with a name and play. This sport and this space is for everybody to play”. This really shows the change of mindset that this project has brought to our community. ”

Luli, YABC & F4D co-facilitator volunteering with ARC in the Salta humanitarian base camp.



5.2 Iraq

UNITING THROUGH THE POWER OF FOOTBALL IN IRAQ

PROJECT INFORMATION

Locations

— 5

Baghdad (Karkh + Rusafa), Dhi Qar, Diyala, Muthanna and Nineveh

Implementation Period

— 8 months

August 2021 - March 2022

Trainers

— 2

YABC trainers from the Egyptian Red Crescent Society coached online on YABC & F4D sessions, tools & methodology

Facilitators

— 34

youth completed the YABC & F4D in-person Training of Facilitators

Participants

— 264

youth – at risk of violence and exclusion, in particular Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), returnees, and youth with disabilities – completed the YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum

Micro-Projects

— 24

youth-led & community-based Micro-Projects successfully implemented

People Reached

— 6,700

community members served and reached through the Micro-Projects & the *No to Drugs* campaign including 122 Persons with Disabilities

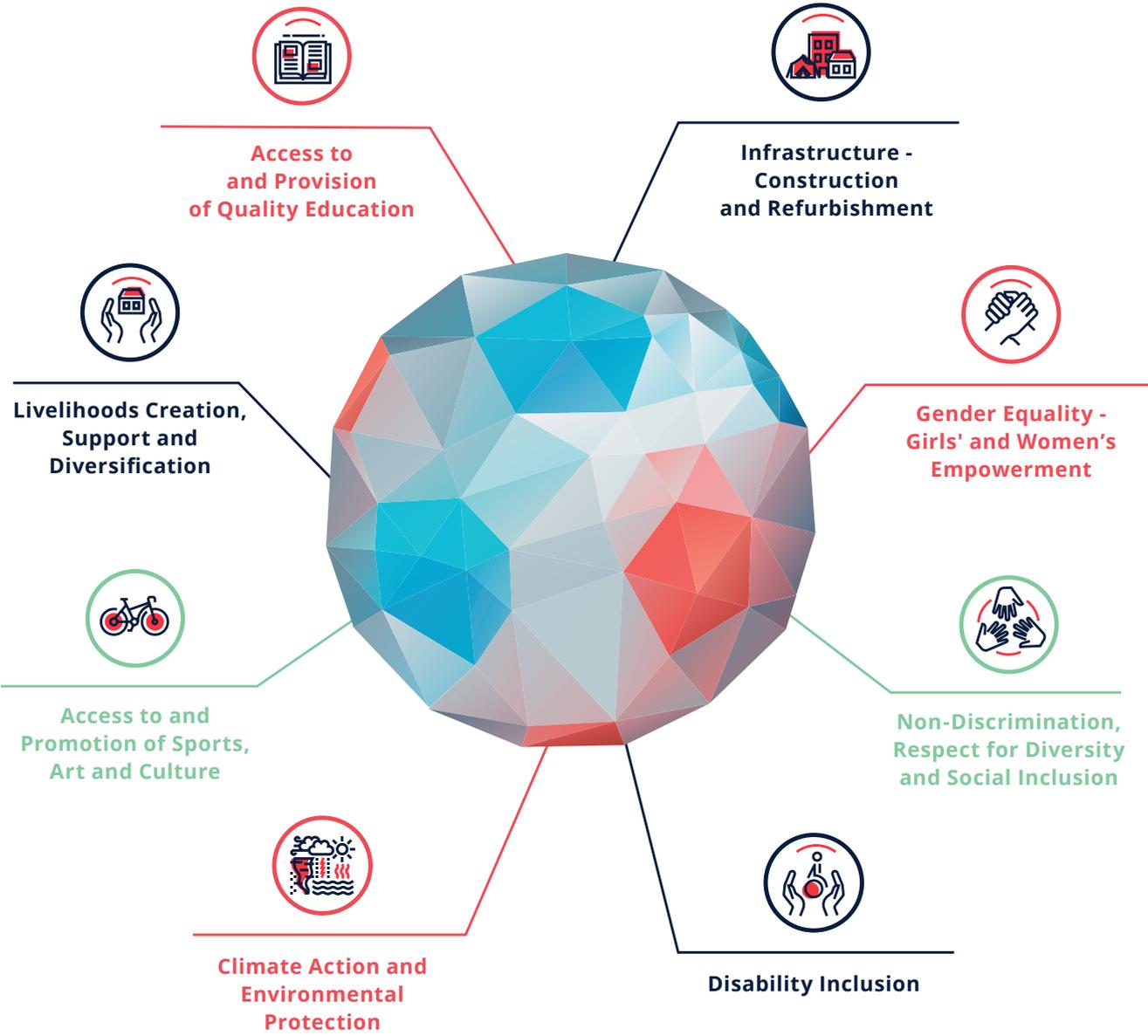


IRAQ



Football is the most popular sport in Iraq and in the past has brought together the different communities living in the country. With the *Uniting Through the Power of Football in Iraq*, the Iraqi Red Crescent Society and its volunteers further demonstrated the powerful impact of Humanitarian Education and Sports for Development and Peace in promoting social inclusion, with a strong focus on the empowerment of women and persons with disabilities.

Micro-Projects Thematic Areas



Country Overview

General Context

The humanitarian context in Iraq remains fragile despite the end of formal military operations. It is characterised by protracted internal displacement; eroded national social cohesion; extensive explosive ordnance threatening internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees and communities.¹¹

It is estimated that 60% of Iraq's population is under 25 years old, with the youth population of the country expected to jump to 10 million by 2030.¹² Despite its growing numbers and great potential, over the past decades **Iraqi youth have continuously suffered from stifling socio-economic conditions**. The opportunities to thrive have often been paralysed by a lack of resources, a failing job market, a stagnated economy and reduced access to essential services as a result of war, sanctions and internal political instability.

Geographically, Iraq is extremely susceptible to **natural disasters and human induced hazards**, including droughts, floods, desertification, sandstorms and earthquakes, which contribute to increased vulnerability, poverty and economic disparities.¹³

The Covid-19 Pandemic and its Impact on the Project

Since the beginning of the pandemic, country officials estimate that more than 2 million people have been infected by the virus with a reported 25 thousand deaths. The government has continuously enforced containment measures, including lockdowns and border closures, which have severely affected the country's socio-economic development, with heavy consequences on the already **high youth unemployment rate**. This is seen to have significant negative repercussions on both the physical and mental well-being of young people.¹⁴

The movement restrictions and safety measures for the containment of the Covid-19 Pandemic represented additional challenges for the project implementation: it caused, for instance, a delay in the start of the project activities which could nevertheless all be successfully implemented though in-person modalities.

11 FRC Country Program Overview for Iraq in 2019, 2019. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/ifrc-iraq-country-program-overview-2019>

12 Amirali, A. The 'Youth Bulge' and Political Unrest in Iraq: A political economy approach. K4D, Knowledge, Evidence, and Learning for Development, Nov.2019. Link: https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/687_youth_bulge_and_political_unrest_in_iraq.pdf/

13 Ibid.,2019

14 Calabrese, J. Iraq's Fragile State in the time of Covid-19, Dec.2020. Link: https://www.mei.edu/publications/iraqs-fragile-state-time-covid-19#_edn1

Project Implementation Overview

Inception and Training of Facilitators (ToF)

In the first phase of the project, 6 locations were chosen from 5 governorates (Baghdad, Diyala, Dhi Qar, Muthanna and Nineveh). The geographic selection was based on needs-based criteria which considered, amongst other variables: vulnerability context with a focus on socio-economic hardships, displacement, unemployment and the density of youth population.

The Iraqi Red Crescent Society also engaged in a careful selection of the volunteers to become YABC & F4D facilitators, who were identified on the basis of their RCRC experience, their engagement in youth development programmes and additional facilitation expertise. Out of 85 applicants, 34 young people were selected to participate in the Training of Facilitators.

The ToF was delivered from 1st to 6th September 2021 in an in-person format by two international YABC trainers from the Egyptian Red Crescent Society. Prior to being deployed to Iraq, the trainers had received further online coaching by the IFRC and GA on F4D, new YABC sessions developed, and the additional tools integrated related to Protection, Gender and Inclusion; Child Safeguarding; Project Cycle Management and Psychosocial Support and First Aid.



Training of Facilitators in September 2021.

Source: IRCS

Hybrid Curriculum Implementation



The second phase of the project engaged 264 youth as participants in the YABC & F4D sessions conducted over a 1-month period.

This phase saw the delivery of the YABC & F4D activities and the use of creative monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tools that also played a role in Psychosocial Support and in fostering self-reflection and self-awareness for participants. The *Tree Mirror activity*, for instance, enabled each participant to represent themselves as trees drawing what keeps them rooted, their skills, motivation and values, their aspirations, connections and achievements – whilst serving as a tool to notice the evolution and journey of each participant throughout the project.

Tahsin Yacoub, a young participant from Diyala, admitted that

“at first I was afraid of expressing my thoughts and opinions, but I took courage seeing the other participants drawing their trees and sharing without any fear.”

As a component of the Hybrid Curriculum implementation, the YABC & F4D activities were accompanied by **friendly football matches and tournaments** suited to further foster cooperation, communication skills, inclusion, self-esteem and confidence among participants.



YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum implementation in Baghdad and Al Muthanna, Diyala, Dhi Qar and Nineveh Provinces in October 2021.

Source: IRCS

Community-Based Micro-Projects

The third phase of the project focused on the design and implementation of 24 youth-led micro-projects. In addressing needs in their communities, the youth teams focused on the following thematic issues:

- **Access to and Promotion of Education, Sports, Art and Culture & Non-Discrimination, Respect for Diversity and Social Inclusion:** organisation of art and culture festivals and innovation conferences to support young artists (especially women) and/or to promote peaceful coexistence among all ethnic groups with a specific focus on the inclusion of minorities; development of scout camps in the neglected archaeological site of Akkarouf and in Chabayish marshes to promote sustainable tourism; creation of a mobile theatre with plays focusing on social inclusion; organisation of inclusive sports tournaments with provision of the necessary equipment.
- **Climate Action and Environmental Protection:** awareness-raising campaigns on the risk of desertification coupled with reforestation and/or cleaning activities.
- **Infrastructure - Construction and Refurbishment:** rehabilitation of youth and sports centres and/or pitches to become safe spaces for gathering and the promotion of a culture of peace and social inclusion.
- **Livelihoods Creation, Support and Diversification:** IT training for unemployed youth; workshop on mobile phone maintenance for young people with disabilities.



Micro-Project implementation, which included projects focusing on gender equality, non-discrimination, social inclusion, cultural and environmental awareness.

Source: IRCS



- **Gender Equality – Girls’ and Women’s Empowerment:** sewing courses and provision of machinery to divorced and widowed women; training of young women to become good communicators and influencers, spreading awareness about Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) and women’s rights; support to women’s inclusion in sports at university level (collaboration with Baghdad University).
- **Disability Inclusion:** training and sport tournaments for young athletes with disabilities in collaboration with the Paralympic Committee and local associations, awareness-raising activities for disability inclusive programmes in sports, education and art.

Project Monitoring and Evaluation

IRCS constantly followed up at branch-level on the project implementation, maintaining constant connection with the youth facilitators and the staff on the ground. Through the administration of the self-assessment questionnaires to the youth participants, the National Society was able to detect a significant change in the attitudes and behaviours of participants and the success of the project in fostering

“the spirit of cooperation among all and the sense of belonging to the society.”
Karrar, participants from Dhi Qar.

Highlights of the Project

"We learned that a person can change the society and that a small project can bring a smile to a young man, a person with disability, a child or a woman."

Mohammed Kamel, IRCS Project Manager

- **Local Collaboration:** for the planning and implementation of all Micro-Projects, IRCS was able to collaborate with national and local stakeholders, in order to reinforce the present impact and the future sustainability of the interventions. The collaborations included the Ministry of Youth and Sports/ Youth and Sports Forums, Ministry of Interior/ Directorate of Community Police, Iraqi Handball Federation, Iraq national team for people with special needs and the Paralympic Committee, several national universities, as well as local civil society and volunteering organisations.
- **Gender Equality Promotion:** IRCS carefully planned and conducted outreach activities to ensure young women's and girls' participation in the project – female facilitators were trained to lead and accompany young women and girls throughout the project, so that **safe spaces for female participants** only were created to allow their full engagement. Several Micro-Projects aimed at women's empowerment through the promotion of access to education, sports and culture as well as livelihood creation, with a strong focus on **making women aware of their legal rights and the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence.**
- **'No to Drugs' campaign:** IRCS organised an additional comprehensive awareness-raising campaign to **promote inclusive and safe sports and prevent the use of addictive substances** both inside and outside the football pitch. The campaign consisted of several mutually reinforcing events and activities: a youth marathon, football and handball matches, additional vocational courses for unemployed youth and youth with disabilities focusing on mobile phone maintenance, environmental activities such as the cleaning of the Tigris River banks, awareness-raising lectures and theatre plays.
- **Outreach to Youth with Disabilities:** IRCS particularly focused on ensuring the **inclusion of young persons with disabilities** in the project activities. The organisation of sports tournaments, vocational training and other activities adapted to the specific needs of this target group aimed at **restoring the self-confidence** of the young people in their potential to play an active role in the society. The visibility of these events helps society at large in welcoming diversity thus opening more space for meaningful inclusion.

Rahman Ali, a facilitator who encouraged a young man who lost his left arm to take part in the project, stated

"this project has made this man another person. He got to be integrated inside the community and he was really excited – at the end of the second stage he joined the team of people with disabilities and is now playing in Baghdad."

VOICES FROM THE PITCH

“ Hello, my name is Muhammad Fayyad and I am one of the trainees of the YABC & F4D project. I live in Sabat Abob in Baghdad. Because of my disability, if I had to go somewhere or do anything my mother would always be by my side to transport and accompany me. We would cover distances of 25 km and the costs of transportation are very high. When I entered the programme, the Iraqi Red Crescent Society provided all of us with transportation, courses on human development and networking, which made us engage more with each other and develop a spirit of cooperation and of coming together. Another thing that this programme brought me was the chance to practice another hobby, teaching me to work with computers, both hardware and software, with workshops about computer maintenance, as well as dealing with customers.

I couldn't be happier to have been a part of this project, everyone treated me with so much respect and I thank the Iraqi Red Crescent so much for making this possible. I wish success to everyone! ”



Muhammad Fayyad, YABC & F4D project participant from Baghdad.

Source: IRCS



5.3 Myanmar

UNITING THROUGH THE POWER OF FOOTBALL IN MYANMAR

PROJECT INFORMATION

Locations

— 6

Kayin State, Mandalay Region, Mon State, Nay Pyi Taw, Shan State (South), Yangon Region

Implementation Period

— 12 months

May 2021-April 2022

Trainers

— 9

2 YABC trainers, 3 YABC peer educators and 4 Football Coaches from Myanmar Red Cross Society coached online on YABC & F4D sessions, tools & methodology

Facilitators

— 30

youth completed the YABC & F4D online Training of Facilitators

Participants

— 264

youth aged between 15 to 35 years old – Myanmar Red Cross Society youth leaders and volunteers, youth from vulnerable communities, including Internally Displaced Persons (IDP), orphans, rural and isolated communities – completed the YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum

Micro-Projects

— 21

youth-led & community-based Micro-Projects successfully implemented

People Reached

— 3,427

community members served and reached through the Micro-Projects



MYANMAR



As football takes the top spot as the most popular sport in Myanmar, communities have shown a long-standing passion and knowledge of the game. With the strategic and operational support of the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS), the implementation of the *Uniting Through the Power of YABC and Football* pilot project transformed football into a gateway for young people in Myanmar to connect in a time of great uncertainty, develop self-awareness and self-confidence and therefore drive change in their communities.

Micro-Projects Thematic Areas



Country Overview

General Context

Myanmar is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world. This **high vulnerability to natural hazards coupled with armed conflicts**¹⁵ aggravate a fragile socio-economic context characterised by chronic poverty, gender disparities and erosion of social support networks.¹⁶

Young people are among the most fragile and marginalised groups in society. Many are migrating to the larger urban regions of Mandalay, Naypyidaw and Yangon in search of better academic and professional opportunities. The negative implications of this exodus to urban areas are **increasing unemployment rates and decreasing income levels**, derived from the high number of people competing over limited resources. As a result, young people face increased **psychological distress and mental health issues**. Moreover, young people in rural areas have been facing growing political instability with continuous armed clashes that have **forced many to flee their homes and communities**. In the Shan State, Kayin State and Mon State, the dismantling of essential services has continuously deprived children and their families of security, social and economic opportunities including safe access to quality education.¹⁷

These challenges have been exacerbated since February 2021, with civil unrest, creating an unstable political and economic situation, characterised by **a limited banking system, Covid-19 related movement restrictions and pervasive violence** across the whole country.¹⁸

The Covid-19 Pandemic and its Impact on the Project

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a major impact on the country. It has substantially increased the threat to livelihoods with debilitating socio-economic consequences and has considerably weakened an already fragile healthcare system. Since the beginning of the pandemic, **young people have been on the frontline of the response**, playing a central role in helping prevent, control and treat Covid-19.

The preventive measures for the containment of the Covid-19 Pandemic represented additional challenges for the project implementation. The Training of Facilitators, for instance, had to be further **adapted and digitalised**, and delivered online due to strict movement restrictions.

15 IFRC Country Plan for Myanmar in 2021, 2021, p.2. Link: https://www.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/2021-08/Myanmar_Plan_2021.pdf

16 IFRC Emergency Appeal from 10 May 2022, 2022. Link: <https://www.ifrc.org/emergency/myanmar-civil-unrest>

17 Ibid., 2021

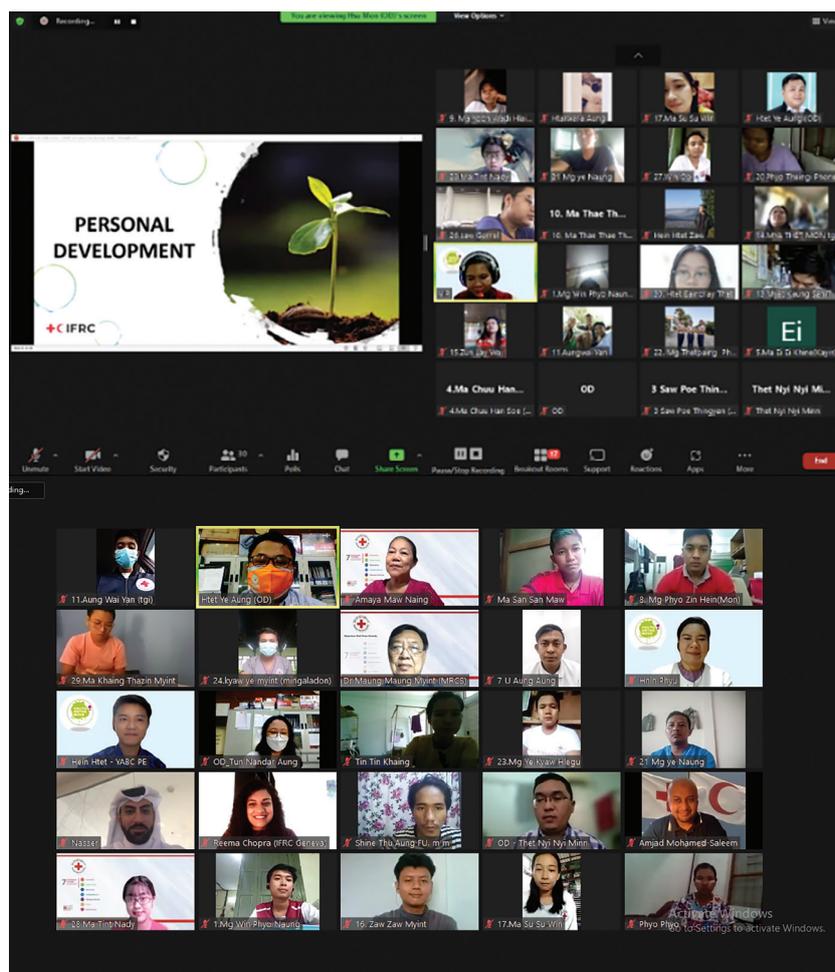
18 Ibid., 2022

Project Implementation Overview

Inception and Training of Facilitators (ToF)

MRCS adopted a strategic and long-term vision of the project's sustainability and strongly focused on **National Society Development**: it promoted and **institutionalised ownership at local level** through the establishment of a project **Supervisory Committee** composed of several branch and State/Region representatives.

The ToF was delivered by a **national team of YABC trainers, with the support of YABC peer educators and Football Coaches** from the "Football United Myanmar" programme, which was previously implemented in collaboration with MRCS. The trainers' team received online coaching by the IFRC and GA on F4D, newly developed digital YABC sessions, and on additional sessions and tools integrated related to Protection, Gender and Inclusion (with a specific focus on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression and Sexual Characteristics – SOGIESC); Child Safeguarding; Project Cycle Management and Psychosocial Support (PSS) and First Aid (PFA). The ToF took place **online over 12 days** with a total of 30 facilitators trained on the YABC & F4D activities and pedagogical approach. It kicked-off with a YABC experiential discovery workshop and included **professional external PSS expertise**.



Online implementation of the Training of Facilitators in October 2021.

Source: MRCS

Hybrid Curriculum Implementation



Between October-November 2021, a total of 264 youth in 6 locations participated in the YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum through regular meet-ups over a 2 to 4 week period depending on location. To ensure smooth delivery, MRCS organised coordination meetings with local branches and the facilitators, with particular focus on the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) tools and activities incorporated in the project. MRCS facilitators also received further coaching and support to deliver F4D activities.

Despite the inevitable challenge of transferring the knowledge acquired online on YABC & F4D activities to a face-to-face facilitation, **the result was highly rewarding**, with a participant enthusiastically sharing at the end of the Hybrid Curriculum

“ Now we have the courage and confidence to speak to our peers, families, communities, and society - to inspire change - now we don't feel alone any longer”

as reported by Ms. Thae Thae Tone, YABC & F4D Facilitator from Mon State.

Through the project, there was a **+14% increase in participants' self-confidence, resilience and trust towards their peers**; they now see challenges as opportunities to learn and grow. **The number of youth feeling powerless and unable to ask for support/help in hardships was reduced by 50%.**



YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum implementation in Mandalay and Kayin State in November 2021.

Source: MRCS

Community-Based Micro-Projects

To accompany the youth teams in co-creating, planning and implementing their projects, MRCS organised a **2-day online workshop on Project Writing and Project Management Cycle** (PMC), covering all phases: from needs-assessment to M&E, with a focus on budgeting skills, financial management and sustainability. The youth teams were therefore able to identify and respond to the needs in their communities implementing 21 youth-led Micro-Projects from January to March 2022. Their actions focused on the following interconnected thematic issues:

- **Access to and Promotion of Quality Education & Psychosocial Support:** provision of teaching and learning materials and support to students, especially girls, facing financial difficulties while promoting inclusive access to education; organisation of non-formal education and psychosocial support activities for children in IDP camps.
- **Access to and Promotion of Sports, Art and Culture:** provision of sports equipment for inclusive sports tournaments with a focus on ethnic minority groups; provision of books and reading material to the renovated library and development of a self-sustained plan for children and their families to run the space.



Micro-Projects implementation, which included activities focusing on environmental protection, literacy, inclusive and safe access to schools, inter-religious dialogue, gender equality, water and sanitation in IDP camps.

Source: MRCS

- **Climate Action and Environmental Protection:** awareness-raising campaigns and education workshops on waste management and the reduction of plastic usage, as well as upcycling plastic waste into craft objects; clean-up activities to remove waste from the villages and surrounding areas such as ponds and forests.
- **First Aid, Hygiene and Healthy Lifestyles Promotion & Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Preparedness:** provision of Personal Hygiene and First Aid workshops and kits in schools, IDP camps and communities, including repairing the water purification system in one of the IDP camps; DRR and disaster management awareness in schools and the community.
- **Infrastructure – Construction and Refurbishment:** full renovation of a village library; construction of a fence around a primary school to enhance the safety of children and staff; renovation or improvement of football pitches.
- **Livelihoods Creation, Support and Diversification:** provision of IT and First Aid vocational courses for unemployed youth.
- **Gender Equality – Girls’ and Women’s Empowerment:** delivery of YABC & F4D activities focused on gender equality to high-school students; delivery of sexual and reproductive health education sessions and sharing information on prevention of sexual and gender-based violence towards girls and women living in IDP camps.
- **Non-Discrimination, Respect for Diversity and Social Inclusion & Violence Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Promotion of Peace:** joint education and sports activities, awareness-raising campaigns and use of creative platforms (such as theatre, dance, music and visual arts) to reduce and prevent tensions between and within communities, with a focus on the promotion of **interreligious and intercultural dialogue, non-discrimination and respect for (gender) diversity (LGBTQI+)**.
- **Promotion of RCRC Fundamental Principles, Humanitarian Values and Life Skills:** delivery of YABC & F4D activities to primary and middle-school children and youth — often in orphanages, IDP camps, areas populated by different ethnic or religious groups or to youth living in urban areas with high rates of violence — to develop their socio-emotional life skills, improve their well-being, and transform their mindsets and behaviours.

Project Monitoring and Evaluation

In addition to the constant follow-up with local branches, facilitators and youth teams through online meetings, MRCS also organised field visits to the 6 locations to provide technical support for the delivery of the Hybrid Curriculum and for monitoring and gathering evaluation and communications material during the design and implementation of the Micro-Projects. In April 2022, an **in-person final evaluation workshop** was organised with the Supervisory Committee members and YABC & F4D facilitators. MRCS’s use of traditional and creative M&E tools was outstanding, collecting for instance **over 400 pre & post self-assessment questionnaires** from the participants that showed the transformative journey of the youth through the project.

Highlights of the Project

It has been a long time since we did not see the children and youth as happy as they are now. We are used to hearing gunshots from here, but these activities helped the children and youth to relieve their trauma and was also a source of support to the adults.”

Mrs. Daw Kyi San, Chairman of Camp Administrative Committee, Nar Baung IDP Camp, Myanmar



- **Branch, Youth and Volunteering Development:** the project strongly contributed to fostering the **collaboration and built additional trust between MRCS headquarters and branches, as well as expanding inter-branch collaboration.** MRCS local units were empowered with leading roles in the planning and implementation of the project as members of the Supervisory Committee. Local staff and volunteers dealt directly with the partners and community members. The capacity of the youth to lead and deliver on projects was enhanced, with facilitators being actively involved in all phases, from the

preparation of logistics arrangements, to handling the challenges of withdrawing cash from the bank, the delivery of the activities, managing the M&E, dealing with project staff for all the data, records, reports and financial clearance”

Mr. Myint Naing, Secretary of the Kayin State Supervising Committee.

This impressive involvement fostered a **positive attitude change at leadership level towards meaningful youth engagement and participation in the National Society’s decision making.**

- **Empowerment of women and LGBTQI+ persons:** MRCS ensured a **balanced representation of male and female facilitators and participants** in the project. The engagement of girls in a male-dominated sport such as football helped to **reduce gender stereotypes and harmful cultural norms**, which often sees girls and young women being excluded from educational activities and sport. The integration of additional sessions on SOGIESC helped facilitators in addressing gender taboos and **empowering members of the LGBTQI+ community**, providing a reference for self-understanding and acceptance, as well as a platform to engage in social activities.

“*As I am part of the LGBT community, I can tell you: my journey has been tough in my community. This YABC & F4D toolkit makes me believe in myself and encourages me to find ways to help other people in my environment.*”

San San Maw, YABC & F4D Facilitator from Yangon Region.

- **Promotion of Humanitarian Values, Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue:** MRCS Youth integrated a strong Humanitarian Education component in their Micro-Projects, delivering YABC & F4D sessions to children, adolescents and young adults in their communities. The youth teams operated in **multi-ethnic and multi-religious contexts** that suffered from decades of segregation and discrimination, with the aim to promote respect for diversity, mutual understanding, social inclusion and unity.
- **Focus on and integration of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS):** promoting MHPSS among everyone involved in the project was central to the success of the Myanmar pilot given the fragile context. **Specific MHPSS webinars and group counselling** delivered by external professionals were integrated in the ToF. In addition, **individual counselling sessions** were made available to all staff, volunteers and participants during all phases of the pilot project. The YABC & F4D project was described by the youth as a source of happiness, sense of belonging, hope, PSS support, and motivation amid very difficult times, representing

“*an oasis in the desert and light in the midst of darkness*”

Dr Lynn Lynn Thet, Director of Organisational Development of the MRCS.



Youth practicing Qi-Gong as part of the YABC 'Inner Peace' module.

Source: MRCS

VOICES FROM THE PITCH

“ The story that I want to share is not my story but the story of a 17-year-old boy who has become one of my best friends. When we first met, on the Micro-Project’s first day, he was really quiet, kept to himself and didn’t seem to have a lot of friends. I saw a change on the second day of activities as he seemed interested in the workshop about gender. The YABC activity called ‘Gender Box’ included role-playing and a lot of space for sharing, which seemed to attract his interest and get him actively engaged. The space for sharing and self-reflection made him open-up, and he told me about his struggles; how he felt different from the others and that he feared judgement and being bullied by his peers.

As I listened and as he went through the programme, we connected and through the shared reflections on topics like sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and gender characteristics, he was able to reflect on what he believed to be male and female roles and responsibilities, and slowly acknowledge and finally accept his own identity. It was amazing to see that by accepting himself, he felt like he fitted in more with other students, within the community, and with his friends, that have also been more open-minded and open to seeing diversity as an opportunity.

We still talk today, even after the project has ended. As for me, I have learned that other people’s assumptions, judgements and lack of acceptance leads to exclusion. By raising awareness and talking about ourselves with those around us, we can change each other’s perspectives and live more positively together. ”

Zaw Zaw Myint, YABC & F4D Facilitator from Mandalay.



*Zaw Zaw Myint,
YABC & F4D
Facilitator
from Mandalay.*

Source: MRCS



5.4 Uganda

UNITING THROUGH THE POWER OF FOOTBALL IN UGANDA



UGANDA



PROJECT INFORMATION

Locations

— 3

Kampala, Rhino Camp (Arua), and Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement (Kamwenge)

Implementation Period

— 12 months

May 2021 – April 2022

Trainers

— 3

YABC trainers from Armenian Red Cross, French Red Cross and Pakistan Red Crescent Society coached online on YABC & F4D sessions, tools & methodology

Facilitators

— 32

completed the YABC & F4D in-person Training of Facilitators

Participants

— 264

youth aged between 18 to 30 years old, in particular, youth in refugee camps, informal settlements and host communities at risk of violence and exclusion, completed the YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum

Micro-Projects

— 19

youth-led & community-based Micro-Projects successfully implemented

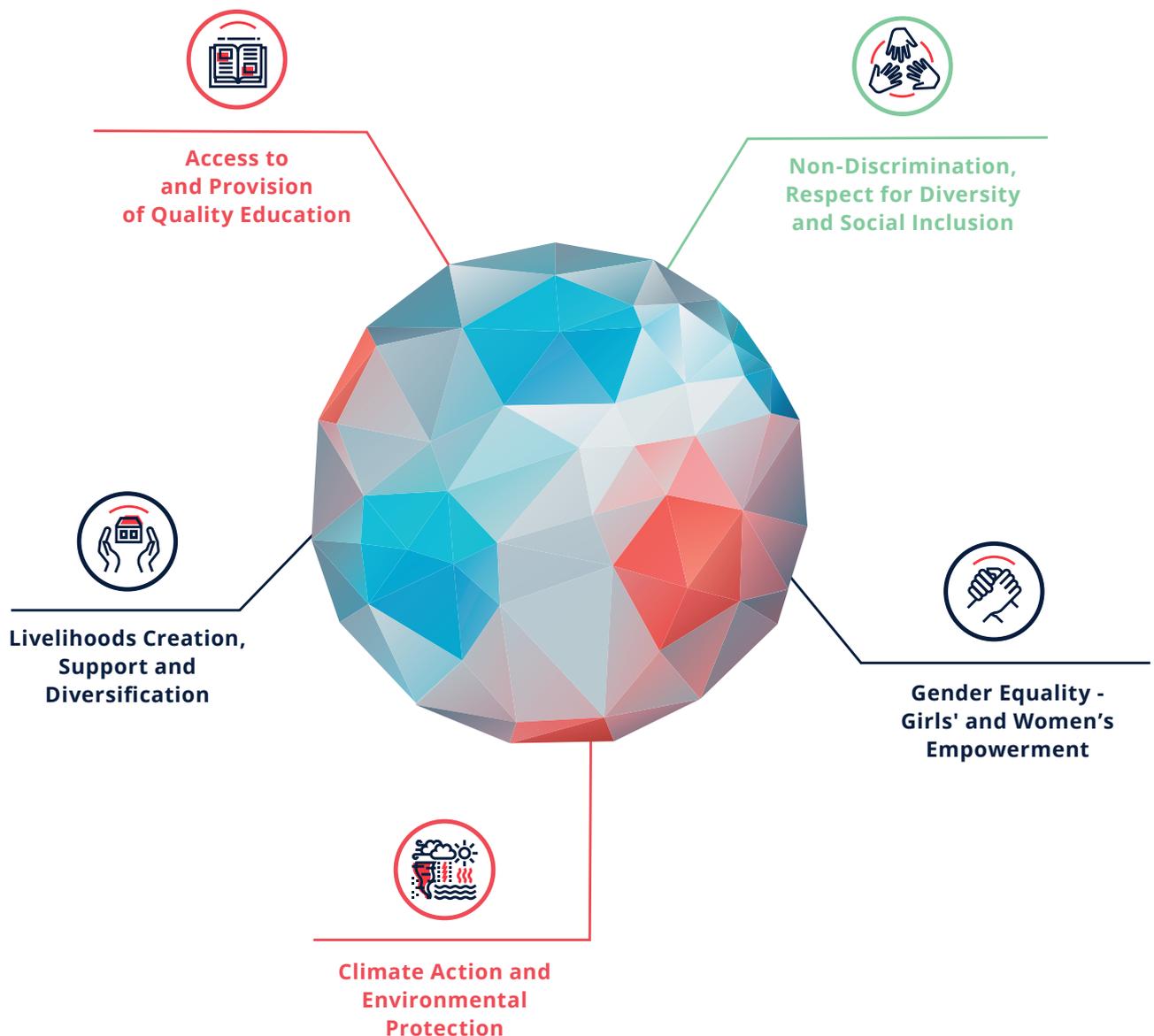
People Reached

— 2,690

community members served and reached through the Micro-Projects

The *Uniting Through the Power of Football* project in Uganda strongly focused on bringing together young refugees who fled their countries and vulnerable youth from the host communities. It created a space to promote intercultural dialogue, understanding and acceptance, as well as to build confidence, open new perspectives and concrete opportunities for youth who had lost everything and could now regain hope of a better future.

Micro-Projects Thematic Areas



Country Overview

General Context

Uganda is the second-most populated landlocked country in the world, with a population of over 41 million people. The country hosts the **highest number of refugees in Africa**, an estimated 1.4 million additional people, with the majority fleeing from South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Burundi and Eritrea. 60% of this refugee population are young people under the age of 18 years old.¹⁹ Their **vulnerability is strongly intersectional** and particularly evident for girls and young women and members of ethnic or religious minorities. Gender disparities and high rates of **sexual and gender-based violence** especially among female sex workers is considered to be a national concern.²⁰ Decades of regional instability due to political tensions in neighboring countries have resulted in **strained social services in refugee-hosting districts** and increased socio-economic tensions which has directly impacted youth unemployment.²¹

Uganda is also a **disaster-prone country** that experiences recurring floods, landslides and epidemics, which have increased in frequency and impact in recent years due to climate change.

The Covid-19 Pandemic and its Impact on the Project

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the government of Uganda enforced several preventive measures, including restricting public gatherings, restriction of cross district movement, restricting movement at night and the closure of schools and institutions of higher learning. The prolonged closure – 83 weeks of full or partial school closures – **affected more than 10 million learners, increasing social inequality**²². Throughout the pandemic, issues affecting youth were exacerbated with increased rates of poverty, domestic violence, family conflict, commercial sex activity and teenage pregnancy.

In addition, these restrictions resulted in halting the Hybrid Curriculum phase of the project and delays in the implementation of the Micro-Projects. Despite these challenges, all activities could successfully take place in a face-to-face modality.

19 UNHCR Uganda- Country Refugee Response Plan for 2019-2020, 2021, p.6. Link: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/67314>

20 IFRC Country Plan for Uganda in 2021, 2021. Link: https://www.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/2021-08/Uganda_Plan_2021.pdf

21 UNHCR Uganda Refugee Operation Participatory Assessment Report December 2021, 2021. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/uganda/uganda-refugee-operation-participatory-assessment-2021-national-report-december-2021>

22 The Guardian Online. Uganda's pupils back to school after record 83-week Covid shutdown, Jan 2022. Link: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jan/10/ugandas-pupils-back-to-school-after-record-83-week-covid-shutdown>

Project Implementation Overview

Inception and Training of Facilitators (ToF)

The Uganda Red Cross Society built **strong collaboration with strategic, local stakeholders**, including Government representatives, non-government organisation leaders, refugee settlements’ leaders and refugee leaders, in order to ensure an effective and smooth delivery of activities.

The ToF was delivered by 3 international YABC trainers from the Armenian Red Cross, French Red Cross and Pakistan Red Crescent Society. The trainers had received specific coaching and support from IFRC and GA on F4D, new YABC sessions developed, and on additional tools integrated related to Project Cycle Management; Protection, Gender and Inclusion; Psychosocial Support and First Aid; and Child Safeguarding policy and practices before and during deployment. The training took place in Kampala, from 25th to 31st May 2021 with 32 youth facilitators from the 3 locations of implementation participating.

The ToF succeeded in providing the facilitators with skills, competences and tools to run the Hybrid Curriculum, while also fostering their own inner transformation and resilience. As demonstrated by the sharing of one YABC & F4D facilitator:

“ I experienced a lot from the training, and it was first of its kind to me. Now I have the knowledge to transform the youth within the community without fear and I do everything with a lot of confidence.”



Inception Phase with the arrival of the YABC toolkits and face-to-face implementation of the Training of Facilitators in Kampala.



Source: URCS

Hybrid Curriculum Implementation



Following a 6 to 8-week model, the Hybrid Curriculum was implemented with 264 youth in the 3 locations. The participants were selected in a common effort by URCS and the local partners active in the refugee camps and informal settlements, with several stakeholders underlining the importance of **including female participants and members from ethnic minorities.**

Many of the participants agreed to engage in the project, initially attracted by the idea of playing football, they were later amazed by discovering the transformative effect of the integrated Hybrid Curriculum:

“As a facilitator and young person, I feel empowered to address challenges in my community and being a teacher by profession am integrating the skills and am ready to support schools with YABC & F4D (...). Through Football matches, there has been promotion of togetherness, teamwork, friendship, negotiation, and dialogue in cases of any misunderstanding in their communities.”

Ssemakula Vicent, Facilitator, Rhino Camp.

This experience is documented by a significant increase **(+17%) of participants believing in the possibility of peaceful coexistence among different ethnic groups and (+26%) affirming to know, respect and appreciate other groups' cultural and religious practices.**



Hybrid Curriculum implementation in Rhino Camp Refugee Settlement in Arua District and Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement in Kamwenge District. Participants taking part in the YABC and F4D sessions, as well as football tournaments in 2021.

Source: URCS

Community-Based Micro-Projects

URCS organised Micro-Project ideation meetings to provide the youth teams with the project management skills and tools necessary to proceed in their work of needs-assessment, project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E). The main issue identified by the participants was **youth unemployment and its negative consequences**, including alcohol and drug abuse, pervasive violence and crime, school drop-outs, sexual exploitation and increased rates of teenage pregnancy. A final workshop was carried out to review the proposals, resulting in the finalisation of 19 youth-led Micro-Projects **focusing on vocational skills development and social enterprise start-ups**.

- **Livelihoods Creation, Support and Diversification:** the youth served by the Micro-Projects (mainly refugees, out-of-school youth, unemployed youth and sex workers) were trained and provided with the essential equipment to start working as bakers, hairdressers, artisans producing crafts, liquid and bar soap as well as eco-friendly paper bags, craft shoes and concrete bricks. Other training and material provided focused on information and communications technology (ICT) and secretarial services.
- **Gender Equality – Girls’ and Women’s Empowerment & Climate Action:** some groups focused in particular on sanitation and menstrual hygiene management, coupling educational activities with vocational training for the production of reusable sanitary pads for distribution in the settlement.



Micro-Projects implementation, which included projects focusing on livelihood creation: tailoring, hairdressing, and reusable sanitary pad making for refugee communities were among the projects implemented.

Source: URCS

Project Monitoring and Evaluation

URCS carried out multiple monitoring and support activities/visits by facilitators, branch and headquarters staff. In addition, two technical support visits were conducted by the IFRC Regional Office and one technical monitoring and documentation visit was conducted by IFRC Geneva and the Regional Office together with URCS staff. On the latest occasion, several **evaluation focus group discussions** were organised to collect the feedback and testimonies of youth participants, local stakeholders and partners, URCS facilitators and staff. URCS also put particular effort into collecting self-assessment questionnaires and creative M&E tools to document the transformative journey of those involved in the project.

Highlights of the Project

"I have not even achieved what I wanted in my life because of the war breaking out, and then I was forced to move away. But I used to be somebody who loved sports, and I wished to be a player in life (...) when Red Cross brought this project in, I realise I still have a chance of expressing my talent and being useful to the community once again."

Robert Samaya, Participant in YABC & F4D Project,
Rhino Camp (from South Sudan, in the camp since 2016)



- **Access to and Provision of Quality Education:** as agreed with the local partners, URCS paid particular attention to including youth at risk of dropping out of school or youth that had already abandoned education. These children and young adults are those particularly at risk of child labour and/or child marriage, engaging in unhealthy coping behaviours and experiencing violence. The provision of the YABC & F4D non-formal educational activities helped bridge the gap between formal education and employment by providing essential life-skills and vocational training to improve the livelihoods opportunities for vulnerable youth.

- Strategic Partnership and Institutionalisation of the Hybrid Curriculum:** URCS strongly focused on cooperating with strategic stakeholders including Windle International, a leading agency on education interventions in refugee settlements, local sport clubs and associations. Notably, the **collaboration with the Government of Uganda** represented by the Youth Affairs Department in the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development resulted into the development of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry and the National Society for the integration of the Hybrid Curriculum in the formal education system and scaling-up the project at national level (MoU under development at the time of end of project implementation).
- Local Collaboration:** URCS successfully engaged the United Somali Community Leadership and youth in dialogues and consultation on how the Somali girls could participate in football and YABC activities while still wearing their cultural and religious dress. Despite the conservative culture and initial barriers, they participated wholeheartedly in the project.
- Improving Livelihood Opportunities:** one of the sensitive topics addressed through the project has been prostitution and its devastating effects on girls and young women, including early pregnancy and marriage. The provision of vocational training and start-up equipment to those particularly vulnerable groups was aimed at improving their livelihood opportunities thereby reducing the chance of becoming sex workers due to the lack of alternative sources of income.
- Violence Prevention:** URCS is working in a refugee camp which has instances of youth suicide: Two participants disclosed that they had planned their suicide after failing to find better options to address their challenges. The project has impacted them in such a way that they see the value in themselves and the difference they can make and are now not intending to do this. They feel there is the chance to live again.



VOICES FROM THE PITCH

“ My name is Tinah. I’m a refugee from Rhino Camp for Resettlement. I am originally from Kenya. When you get to these camps there are just a lot of times when we have not much to do and it is difficult to find a purpose, to grow my knowledge. So, when I was chosen to be part of the YABC Project I was excited about the things I was going to learn to do. I wanted the skills to make something for myself.

At first, I was very surprised about how much we learned and did, because I originally thought it was only about football. But I soon realised how the project impacted other areas.

For us in the camp, the Project made a big difference because we learned how to communicate with each other and how to cooperate with other tribes. It also gave us girls the opportunity to show and improve our skills, and we now play with the boys and we are as good as them. So, this made a big difference.

For me personally, I learned how to express myself, I have grown in confidence. I used not to be confident, I used not to talk. But since I joined the YABC project, I’m confident and I feel I can do whatever I want. Even in school, I’m the head girl of our school because of my confidence.

For our community, we made a tailoring project that we hope will lead to us teaching other youths to do the same. Our goal is to one day become trainers ourselves to teach others to help themselves. ”



Tinah Nalisa, YABC & F4D participant from Kenya living in Rhino Camp.

Source: URCS



6. KEY OBSERVATIONS

Importance of maintaining a tailored, adaptable, and flexible approach:

The challenges to implementation have afforded the project a unique opportunity to be creative in its delivery, flexible in its approach, and adaptable to the needs of local context and travel restrictions, while maintaining the core components, phases, and essence of the initial proposal. This resulted in several delivery models being developed and tested. Providing and promoting a flexible and adaptable delivery model has supported IFRC and the 4 implementing National Societies to find together the approach most suited to each context. This tailored approach based on need has increased engagement, leading to a successful and impactful project intervention. Ultimately, it has also amplified and accelerated the learnings received throughout the pilot project implementation.

Online vs face-to-face training:

Although an online ToF was necessary for the project delivery and progress in certain contexts (Myanmar, Argentina) due to the pandemic and other challenges, and although the digitalisation process allowed for significant innovation to overcome contextual challenges, an online format for the YABC & F4D training should be kept as a 'last resort' only, if there is no other option available (i.e., not opting for an online format merely to cut on budget or avoid travels that could take place). Trainers who delivered the online training underlined the unavoidable 'screen fatigue' felt by facilitators, as well as the additional difficulty/challenge for them to transfer activities, especially the new F4D component, from an online experience to a face-to-face setting during the Hybrid Curriculum implementation. Although facilitators successfully overcame this challenge by effectively conducting impactful



Source: MRCS

activities, the in-person implementation of the ToF remains by far the preferred option in terms of the pedagogical approaches inherent to the YABC & F4D curriculum.

Engaging National Society staff in project trainings/workshops:

Engaging staff and building their capacity through the project trainings has proved to be beneficial for them at both personal and professional levels, and therefore contributed to enhancing staff and volunteer well-being, teamwork, and cohesion, as well as the qualitative dimension of the Red Cross Red Crescent work. It is important to engage National Society staff continuously and further at all levels and age groups in the project trainings/workshops. This proved to be effective for enabling project staff/managers/leadership to better and more concretely 'grasp' the essence of the project, as well as better accompany the youth throughout the project, identify other communities and strategic opportunities, integrate into other existing programmes, advocate, and seek opportunities for sustainability.

Engaging an intergenerational approach:

Inclusion has been one of the core elements of the pilot project, this focus can be further strengthened by intentionally integrating an intergenerational dialogue and collaboration perspective. Indeed, for a more comprehensive and inclusive approach, it is of paramount importance to engage, involve and focus not only on youth but also on other age groups and members of the community, such as parents/ caregivers, the elderly, and community leaders. Upon seeing the sessions and their impact, these parts of society have expressed their strong desire to be included in such activities, and when they have been included (such as in the case of Argentina), they testified to have greatly benefited from this engagement. It contributed to creating more peaceful and harmonious environments within their households, as well as safer environments within the wider community.



Source: URCS



7. LESSONS LEARNT

What have we learnt from this project? Especially from a project, with different variations due to the differing contexts, there are a number of lessons to reflect on. Perhaps, the most significant overall lesson is that football as an impetus for social change while engaging out-of-school, vulnerable and at-risk youth in leadership development and social entrepreneurship is an impactful methodology that works. The theory of change outlined at the beginning of the project was demonstrated to be sound.

We also saw evidence that football aimed at social change, coupled with Humanitarian Education, and combined with micro grants can allow young people to:

- contribute to preventing violence from the onset;
- improve access to education and employment;
- ensure better social inclusion and build the resilience of at risk marginalised communities;
- lead to healthier lifestyles, improved engagement, reduced peer problems and enhanced prosocial behaviours; and thereby
- contribute to several SDGs at once, especially SDG 3, 4, 5, and 16.

The stories documented at individual, interpersonal, community, and organisational levels, from the 4 pilot countries demonstrate how the project filled a gap for young people and communities. The fact that that gap actually increased through unforeseen external challenges meant that the life-changing and life-saving experience (thanks to its suicide prevention in some cases) actually took on added importance.

It is impossible to know whether the project would have been as life-changing if there had not been a global pandemic. The stories we have learnt from the project affirm this. However, the fact that the project could be quickly adapted to be successfully implemented in 4 very different contexts with differing challenges, all with positive stories, speaks to the success and the agility of the project.

As one participant from Myanmar noted, the YABC & F4D Hybrid Curriculum and Micro-Projects represented *“an oasis in the desert and light in the midst of darkness”*.

In conclusion, we have solid evidence that the model of a Hybrid Curriculum coupled with Micro-Projects works well and is a way for IFRC to expand its youth engagement footprint in the future.



Source: MRCS



8. RECOMMENDATIONS

What can the partners take as next steps for the project?

1 Focus on youth-led and youth co-created approaches – The project has highlighted the value and importance of youth-led and youth co-created community-based projects, whilst preserving a space for inter-generational dialogue and solidarity. There needs to be more investment in such initiatives. The model of Youth-Led Micro-Projects has great potential to foster youth engagement within and beyond the Movement, with a strong impact on community resilience. This is especially true in light of the overlapping challenges derived by the COVID-19 pandemic that exacerbated pre-existing socio-economic and other disparities and mental health issues, with the negative side-effects of technology (influence and pressures of social media, increased screen time, isolation, disconnection from outdoor activities and nature, etc.), as well as the failure of some (outdated) education systems to effectively meet (learning) needs of youth (standardised measures of success that penalise diversity, lack of focus on socio-emotional learning and life skills, lack of experiential and participant-centred pedagogical approaches, etc.).

2 Focus on partnership and co-creation – This project provided the opportunity for National Societies to build key, local strategic partnerships at national and community

level, all having a role in co-creation, contributing to localisation, ensuring further sustainability to National Society interventions and youth engagement, as well as opening new perspectives for collaboration. In addition, Micro-Projects seeming to have the most long-term and holistic impact are those which were built on such local strategic partnerships, as well as based on community needs and their engagement. Partnership development at national and local levels should be further encouraged and remain a central point for these kinds of projects and (systematically) be integrated in project proposals as a key objective.

3 Expansion to other opportunities – There is a lot of potential to broaden the scope of the curriculum, project, and partnerships, expanding the YABC and football project, combine YABC with other sports, arts and other activities for future expansion, and thereby engaging a more preventive and holistic approach to address other needs. In some contexts, youth participants had a stronger affinity for basketball, netball or volleyball in comparison to football. In such cases, facilitators were encouraged to remain open and adapt as needed the football games into a hand game, whilst keeping the same essence, game dynamics and learning objectives of the activity. Going a step further, it may be envisaged to broaden the scope of the project, for instance, by combining the YABC with other types of sport, and other arts/creative means (e.g.,



Source: MRCS

dance, music, martial arts, drama pedagogy, art therapy, yoga, mindfulness, etc.), which have the potential to bring additional key life skills from a different angle (discipline, respect, perseverance, coordination, flow, compassion, breathing, teamwork, healing, self-expression, etc.). In addition, there can be an expansion of the educational curriculum and learning offer to include other thematic areas such as ensuring comprehensive health education including a specific focus on mental health.

The COVID-19 lockdowns globally have prompted a rethink of a better understanding of healthy lifestyles and mental health. As testified by the successful ARC model, the use of sport was complemented by teaching and providing youth and parents/caregivers key tools and knowledge in this regard. This integration based on identified needs represented an essential added value for communities, who highly appreciated this transformational/life-changing component of the project. This serves as a valuable lesson learnt and recommendation moving forward, as it is indeed crucial to recognise and further promote the importance of both physical activity and healthy diet as essential pillars of cultivating holistic healthy lifestyles, as well as understanding and further unpacking their inherent interlinkages with mental and physical health.

Mental health has emerged as a crucial

issue among youth and other age groups during the pandemic and of course in places like Myanmar where the political crisis created additional stressors for young people. It is also a thematic area that has been highlighted and needs to be further addressed and invested in, including by building upon and further integrating existing tools from the YABC inner peace module, PSS, breath work, mindfulness, and other (secular) contemplative practices/tools, etc. The project, by its very nature, successfully contributed to addressing some mental health issues by providing a safe space for human interaction and connection, physical and outdoor activities, opportunities to contribute to something bigger enhancing a sense of purpose, as well as focusing on emotional learning (YABC).

4

Validation of a Sport for Development and Peace approach

– The project validates a Freirean model of community-based rehabilitation. The Freirean model of dialogue, conscientization, praxis, transformation, and critical consciousness, offers a lot of potential for evaluating community-based rehabilitation programs. The unique feature of this pedagogical approach is ‘process centered’ as opposed to ‘outcome-centered’ or ‘product centered.’ It does not prescribe any acceptable end product in the beginning but only specifies the approach to be adhered to. Through



Source: MRCS

football sessions, a tool for dialogue is set up which coupled with the classroom sessions on YABC, paves the way for looking at identifying the problem, reflecting and doing something to change the situation (through the Micro-Projects). Through the co-creation and co-leading of the projects from the community, a critical consciousness is raised. The project reinforces the Freirean model as a concept for Sport for Development and Peace, the evidence being generated can be used to increase the knowledge, evidence base and advocacy in this area within the humanitarian sector.

There is also a need to strengthen the knowledge and evidence base of Sport for Development and Peace within the humanitarian sector: when initially working on and presenting the core idea of the project, a strong need to increase the knowledge and evidence of SDP within the humanitarian sector was observed. This pilot proof of concept has provided essential material to support the process, confirming the potential and positive impacts of SDP programmes.

Since the closure of the UN Office for Sport for Development and Peace in 2017, there is no major development or humanitarian actor working primarily on this issue, leaving a lack of a global reference point to

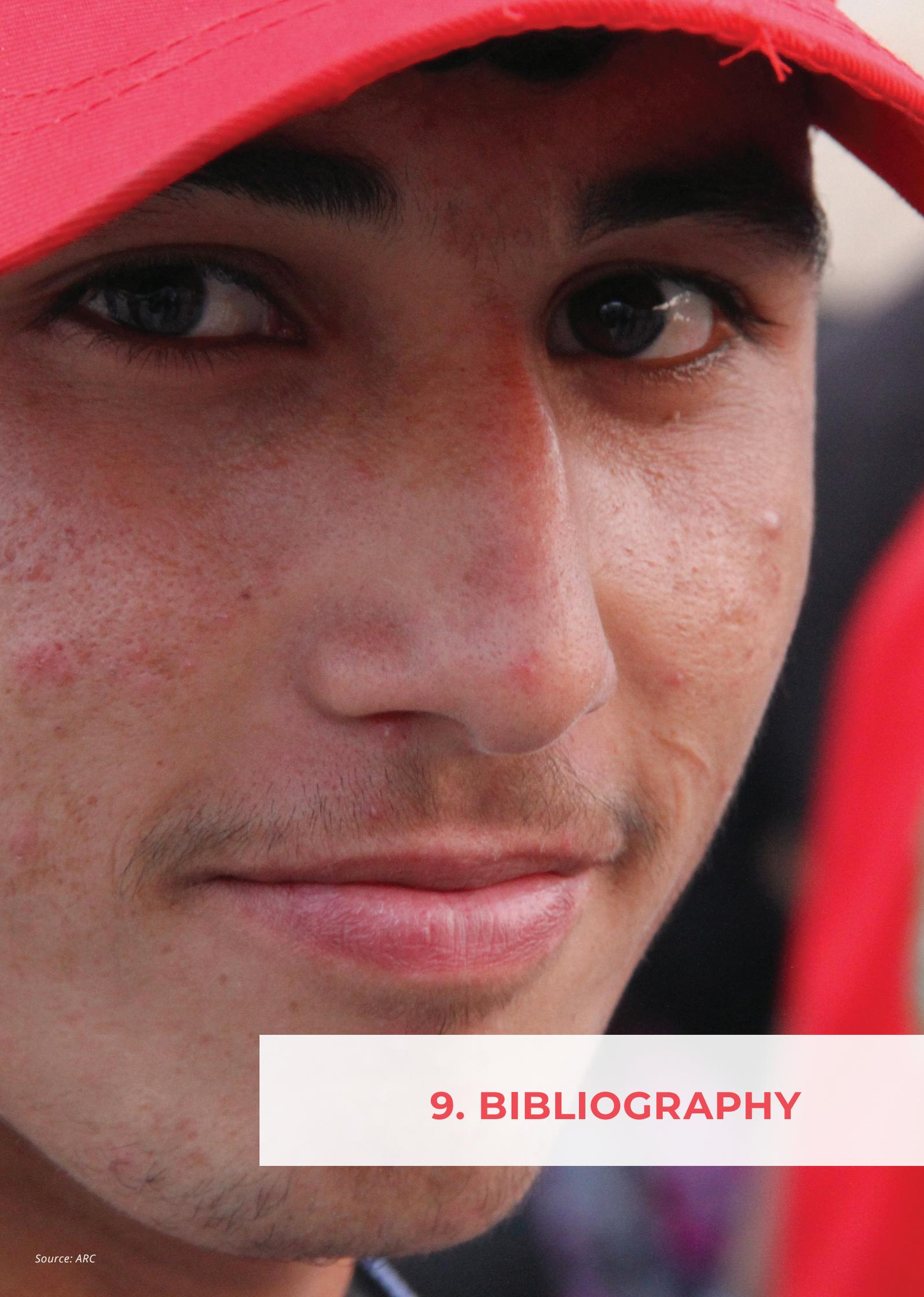
provide leadership, raise awareness, and develop tools for the use of sport and physical activity in the advancement of peace and development objectives.

There is a potential for the IFRC and its partners to meet this need by further integrating sports into their programmes. In addition, through its vast youth and volunteer network, the IFRC and National Societies can become a leading global voice for youth, driving the promotion of best practices of SDP in their respective communities. There are four key recommendations on how IFRC could develop this role:

- The first is through programme integration so that operational frameworks and structures are aligned. The IFRC should work further to integrate sports within our programmes and policies, to promote social inclusion, protection, education and engagement. The IFRC should consider the concept of a specialised “sports delegate” preferably between the 19–30-year age range who could be deployed within a humanitarian setting with some specific training. The position could be piloted in Cox’s Bazaar, for example with a “sports / youth delegate” being deployed in the camps to work on sports programme for psychosocial engagement and on building trust, working with specialised PGI and



Source: URCS



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The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest humanitarian network, with 192 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and around 14 million volunteers. Our volunteers are present in communities before, during and after a crisis or disaster. We work in the most hard to reach and complex settings in the world, saving lives and promoting human dignity. We support communities to become stronger and more resilient places where people can live safe and healthy lives, and have opportunities to thrive.



The Generation Amazing Foundation (GA) is a human and social legacy focused organisation that launched in 2010 during Qatar's successful bid for the 2022 FIFA World Cup™. GA operates its sport for development programmes in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and Qatar's National Vision 2030, to promote sustainability, inclusion, and gender equality. GA's unique methodology utilises the power of football to impart crucial life skills including communication, leadership, teamwork and compassion to youth and communities in need across the globe. Since its launch, GA, in collaboration with key partners, has reached and positively impacted over 1 million lives in 35 countries and counting.

