

READY, STEADY, GO!



11 top tips for engaging refugee girls and women in football



CREATE A SAFE SPACE

Traumatic experiences, religious factors, lack of availability of good quality, accessible pitches: There are many reasons why sports programmes should take place in a closed and protected environment. Sit down with your group to discuss when and how your sports activity may also take place in public or as part of a competition.

SPORTS HALL

PARTICIPATION NEEDS TRUST

Recruiting participants requires trust and face-to-face communication. Visit potential participants personally and introduce yourself and tell them what you have to offer. Advertise your session through charities working with refugees and people seeking asylum and schools where appropriate, and via social workers. Having a flyer in multiple languages helps but is not enough.

SAME TIME, SAME PLACE

The sessions should take place regularly and reliably and should be easy to get to. At the beginning, it may be necessary to pick up your participants and take them to the venue. Regardless of the number of participants and weather conditions, one person who is trusted by the participants must always be there and oversee the session.

TACTICAL PREPARATION

Which sport do you want to offer? Do you want to recruit refugee participants for an existing team or would you prefer to create something new? Be very clear on what you want to achieve and who you want to reach. Be creative, and persevere!

DON'T FORGET THE FAMILIES

Reach out not only to your target group but also to their family members. If you want to offer a sports programme for any children (under 18), their parents, guardians or carers need to give written consent and sign a medical form. If you want to offer a training session for women, they may need childcare to be able to participate.

BE FLEXIBLE TO MEET ALL NEEDS

Do you have varying numbers of participants? Organise your session in a way that prepares you for different group sizes. Some participants are late? No problem, they can simply join in when they get there. For those who haven't participated in sport before, it helps to have a consistent training routine. Scan the QR code on the training manual for concrete tips on how to deal with groups of variable size.



COACH, I HAVE AN IDEA!

Let the girls and women participate in the session and make their own decisions. Do they want to try a different sport? Are boys and men allowed to join in? Give them a say in how the session is run and support their ideas. If people feel they 'own' an activity, they feel valued and well cared for and are likely to get more involved.

OUR LAWS OF THE GAME

LEARNING ENGLISH ON THE SIDE

Language is a challenge but not a barrier. Communicate clearly and use body language as much as possible. Ask participants who have the language skills to do so to help out and translate more complex issues.

TOWARDS A NEW WORLD: POPULAR SPORTS!

Do your participants want to take part in a competition or meet team mates who grew up in the UK? Where do athletes train at a competitive level, and where do people play for leisure? How do I sign up for a sports club? How do I volunteer in sport? Help your players discover the exciting world of popular sports. This will be a win-win situation for everyone!

EXTRA TIME

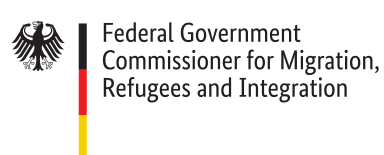
Your work as a coach does not begin and end with your presence on the pitch. Your preparation and the 'extra time' you spend together are as important as the sport itself: What's new? What are the issues on your participants' minds? Give them the time they need, be interested in what they have to say and be ready to listen.

THE TEAM BEHIND THE TEAM

Sounds like a lot of work? Don't do it alone. Get support from people who are important to your participants, such as social workers, family members, carers, charity staff/volunteers etc. If you are a woman and familiar with your participants' world and daily experiences, that's great! Otherwise, ask a woman who your group trusts to help you run the project.



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