DISCOVER FOOTBALL FOR GOOD IN MUMBAI THROUGH THE LENS OF JUAN MATA & EVELINA KAMPH

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A groundbreaking initiative designed to create safe and supportive football environments for vulnerable youth who identify as LGBT

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AN INTERVIEW WITH COMMON GOAL PLAYER AND USWNT STAR MEGAN RAPINOE

Megan Rapinoe talks about Proud2Play and the importance of “safe spaces” and “allyship” for LGBT youth in sports environments

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streetfootballworld has always been about collective effort. Team play is at the heart of our values and at the core of what we do. The streetfootballworld network, the trust base it is built upon and the shared vision its members pursue, represent the way in which we work and live our lives. The development of this ever-growing group of organisations led by extraordinary individuals is in itself already a source of personal pride and inspiration, fuelling our belief that another world is possible. But why football?

Football is not only a metaphor for the team play we believe in, it also offers a safe space for building communities, learning about winning and losing and for pursuing dreams. Football is probably the biggest unifier in today’s world, bridging all sorts of divides. I would go even further and say that football has the potential to take on a global leadership role and become a role model and counter-narrative to the growing egoism, separatism and me first attitude, by living up to the very principles of the game. One team, one humanity!

It’s no secret that in order to be an ethical and moral authority, the football industry needs to transform and take the game to a next level. This is, in brief, why we recently started the Common Goal movement. Connecting the so far separated worlds of football and football for good, but also connecting a world that appears to be drifting apart through football. What seems like a hazardous task and crazy idea is also just a natural next step towards achieving the mission streetfootballworld was set up for in a first place: Changing the world through football.

Still, and despite the fact that we knew that we needed to take this next giant leap, we all had more than a few sleepless nights. “No footballer will ever sign up, this is not the way the world works,” said the sceptics. Moving on in the face of such adversity took courage that we were only able to muster up because we also encountered many like-minded “teammates”, who assured us that we weren’t alone in this endeavour.

The response to the launch of Common Goal in August this year, only three months ago, shows that it has already become part of people’s imagination. And I firmly believe that this magic is happening because of the unique passion football inspires and because the rationale behind this movement is not just the idea of giving back, but the dream of building a better world, together, as a team. Exceeding our expectations by far, people from all walks of life have expressed and are expressing their desire to be part of this movement.

Here we are. Believing like never before that together we can make possible the impossible and, along the way, enjoy every single day of this collective journey.

Yours in changing the world through football,

Jürgen Griesbeck
IN FOCUS
EUROPE
football3 Festival 17 in Cologne

NORTH AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN
Proud2Play

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW
AN INTERVIEW WITH MEGAN RAPINOE
Megan Rapinoe talks about Proud2Play and the importance of providing “safe spaces” and “allyship” in youth sports environments.

FOOTBALL4GOOD IN HISTORY
TWO GERMANYYS, ONE GAME

FOOTBALL4GOOD & PHOTOGRAPHY
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A photographic journey to discover football for good in Mumbai, India, where Juan Mata became inspired to join the Common Goal movement.

SPOTLIGHT
THE JOURNEY OF COMMON GOAL

MEET OUR NEW NETWORK MEMBERS
ANGAZA SPORTS AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE
Kenya

CHILDREACH NEPAL
Nepal

DIOGENIS
Greece

MEET ANTONY GITEI, TYSYA, KENYA
Read how football is bringing Antony Gitei from Kitale in Kenya closer to his dream. Kick by kick.

MEET A NTONY GITEI, T YS A, KENYA

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW
AN INTERVIEW WITH MEGAN RAPINOE
Megan Rapinoe talks about Proud2Play and the importance of providing “safe spaces” and “allyship” in youth sports environments.

GUEST ARTICLE
ENGAGING GERMAN FOOTBALL PLAYERS & COACHES IN SOCIAL CHANGE

COMING SOON
FESTIVAL LATAM 2017

THE JOURNEY OF COMMON GOAL

MEET OUR NEW NETWORK MEMBERS
ANGAZA SPORTS AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE
Kenya

CHILDREACH NEPAL
Nepal

DIOGENIS
Greece

FEDEX & UEFA FOUNDATION
FedEx and UEFA Foundation for Children deliver game-changing ‘Field in a Box™’ to Poland.

NETWORK MEMBERS’ STORIES
TWO SIDES, ONE TEAM
The story of YFC Rurka Kalan from the perspective of two young leaders.

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THE JOURNEY OF COMMON GOAL
A UNITED VISION FOR FOOTBALL
WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT

We are living in a time in which football is more profitable than ever, and yet very little of the wealth is trickling down to the fans or, indeed, society at large. Amidst football headlines dominated by news of record-breaking transfer fees, astronomical wages and accusations of tax evasion, the commercialisation of football has worn its cultural fabric so thin that people are starting to question what the game stands for. We strongly believe that there is an untapped opportunity for football and that the time is ripe to unlock it. So, rather than dwelling on the many issues that need to be resolved, we have shifted our attention to the unique potential that football continues to demonstrate in terms of improving young people’s lives.

For more than 20 years, many institutions and individuals within the business have been working hard to identify ways that football can give back to society. However, a major stumbling block for many of the organisations making an impact in the field has been and continues to be gaining access to financial resources. Consequently, football has been divided into two dimensions – one is an industry that harbours a wealth of gargantuan proportions, the other is a global network of high-impact non-profit organisations that rally behind the vision of football for good. Despite football being the most popular sport the world over, the profit from the industry has reached only a fraction of its potential for driving change. Until now.

With Common Goal, we aim to bridge the two dimensions of football by building a sustainable and lasting connection between the football industry and social change. We hope to do that by harnessing the wealth and influence of professional football into a unified front. The idea is simple. To start, football players and coaches pledge at least 1% of their salaries into a collective fund, which we then invest in high-impact football-based charities from the streetfootballworld network.

With the idea for Common Goal in place, it became time to recruit footballers to champion the movement. This task proved difficult to begin with, as it wasn’t easy to get facetime with players, who are already inundated with other asks and opportunities. Furthermore, when we did get in front of them and were able to pitch our idea, it was challenging to convince them to take part in a collective approach rather than pursuing popular alternatives like starting their own foundations. Fortunately for us, streetfootballworld Global Ambassador Juan Mata had the foresight to imagine what Common Goal could do for the football industry and decided to figurehead the movement. “We have so many opportunities simply because we play a children’s game. We are lucky to live a dream,” he explained, “let’s come together and help kids everywhere experience that same light and joy. By doing so we can show the wider football industry that Common Goal needs to happen and that it will happen, because it’s right.”

THE LAUNCH: JUAN MATA ANNOUNCES HIS COMMITMENT TO PLEDGE 1%

On 4th August 2017, Manchester Unite midfielder and Spanish national team World Cup champion, Mata, unveiled Common Goal to the world. He broke the news via an article in The Player’s Tribune stating that: “One of the first lessons I learned in football is that it takes a team to accomplish your dreams. We live by this mantra on the pitch, yet we don’t see enough of it in the social space. Common Goal is creating a collaborative way for football to give back to society.” He continued by urging his fellow footballers to join him, “It’s the most effective and sustainable way that football can deliver long-term social impact on a global scale. Football has the power to do this, but we need to act together.”

Coincidentally, the movement was announced less than 24 hours after news broke that Paris Saint-Germain would more than double the previous transfer fee world record in exchange for Barcelona’s Neymar. This announcement generated widespread conversation about the commercialisation of the football industry and we questioned whether such controversial press would overshadow the support Common Goal was hoping to garner.

However, despite worries that Neymar’s record-breaking transfer would dominate the news cycle, Common Goal was trending in the top ten globally on social media within hours of launching. Rather than eclipsing the announcement, the transfer news actually already had fans talking about changing the game and Common Goal was seen as a definite step in the right direction for the football community. The overwhelmingly enthusiastic reaction from fans, sports journalists, and supporters alike proved that the greater football community was ready to rally behind a positive vision of the game we all love.
SHOWING OTHERS HOW TO FOLLOW, AND MAKING THEM LEADERS

This massive outpouring of support caught the attention of several players who were keen to commit to the movement. Bayern Munich defender and German national team World Cup champion, Mats Hummels, contacted Juan directly about making the pledge. Mats officially signed with Common Goal and further propelled the initiative to reach several million more fans, followers, and football enthusiasts. Just a few short weeks later, the Common Goal team expanded to include another two World Cup champions and Olympic gold medalists – Seattle Reign F.C. winger, Megan Rapinoe, and Orlando Pride forward Alex Morgan. The addition of these two incredible women meant that each of our founding four players were World Cup champions.

“HELLO, I’M GIORGIO CHIELLINI, PLAYER OF JUVENTUS, I’M INTERESTED TO SUPPORT YOUR PROGRAM AND I WOULD LIKE TO GIVE MY CONGRATULATIONS TO JUAN AMATA FOR FIND THE TIME AND HAVE THE IDEA TO SUPPORT THROUGH FOOTBALL PEOPLE LESS LUCKY THAN US.” - GIORGIO CHIELLINI

One of our favourite player signing stories comes from Italian national team player and Juventus defender, Giorgio Chiellini. After subscribing to Common Goal’s mailing list, Giorgio responded to a general newsletter mailing explaining who he was and that he would like to get involved. The communications team couldn’t believe their eyes - could this message really be from the Italian football star himself or was it merely a hoax? Upon verification the email was, in fact, from Chiellini himself and Common Goal welcomed him as the fifth player to make his signing official.

Another German national team member – as well as our youngest ever player to be announced – was Serge Gnabry. Bayern Munich winger currently on loan to 1899 Hoffenheim. Quickly following 22-year-old, our third official German national team player, VfB Stuttgart Captain Dennis Aogo joined the movement. Our next captain announcement came from the other side of the world with F.C. Sydney’s Alex Brosque coming aboard. With the movement attracting players of all different nationalities and backgrounds, we were thrilled to announce Hoffenheim manager, Julian Nagelsmann, as the first coach to sign with Common Goal.

The addition of our first manager kicked off a period of firsts for Common Goal. Within two weeks we signed our first Turkish Player, Fenerbahçe’s Hasan Ali Kalderisman, our first British Players, Charlie Daniels of Bournemouth and Alfie Mawson of Swansea, as well as six female footballers from five different countries across four continents.

These women included Spaniards Olga García (FC Barcelona) and Vero Boquete (Paris Saint-German), German Pauline Bremer (Manchester City), American Heather O’Reilly (Arsenal), Ugandan Jean Sseninde (Crystal Palace), and Colombian Nicole Regnier (América de Cali). The signing of these incredible players marked the biggest announcement ever for Common Goal and drew attention to one of the main objectives that our network partners seek to advance: gender equality. We concluded October’s whirlwind announcements with Dortmund’s Shinji Kawagawa - also signifying that Common Goal has reached Japan. As the movement continues to grow, we’ve had players all around the world contact us about making a pledge.

In a matter of just a couple of months, Common Goal went from a revolutionary idea to a team of dozens of passionate players – several of which are national team players – as well as a dedicated manager, who believe in what football can accomplish.

THE MOVEMENT ALSO MADE HEADLINES IN MORE THAN 500 MEDIA OUTLETS AROUND THE GLOBE – INCLUDING THE BBC, THE GUARDIAN, THE WASHINGTON POST, CNN, ESPN, EL PAIS, SPORTS ILLUSTRATED AND MORE.

The movement also made headlines in more than 500 media outlets around the globe – including the BBC, The Guardian, The Washington Post, CNN, ESPN, El Pais, Sports Illustrated and more. Suddenly, the Common Goal inbox was flooded with interview requests, collaboration opportunities, and – perhaps even more encouraging – emails from fans, clubs, referees, and players around the world reaching out to ask how they could donate or offer support. When we reflect on the factors that played an integral role in launching Common Goal from an internal concept into an international phenomenon, we are continually reminded of the community that shares our vision of football for good. Football’s biggest players are showing an increased appetite for doing good. They’re tackling racism, supporting refugees and promoting equality - by coordinating their efforts their efficiency and impact can be increased by great proportions. With different players driven by different agendas, the football industry continues to squander much of its potential impact.
Until now, the field of football for good has been focused on creating partnership opportunities and unlocking funding for companies, government institutions, and even stakeholders within the football industry. Common Goal differs from other platforms operating under the same philosophy – that football can inspire widespread social change – by embracing that, just like on the field, it takes a team to help bridge the gap between the two dimensions of football. As US anthropologist, Margaret Mead, cautioned “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” This collective approach not only sets Common Goal apart, but allows the potential of each player involved to be magnified and reach a far greater impact than any one individual working alone.

One percent of any given player’s salary – especially those in the highest earning bracket – might seem like a small figure. However, we intentionally set the minimum pledge at one percent to make the movement accessible to professional players and coaches of all pay grades. When you consider that “just one percent” of the entire football industry’s worth is already four hundred million euros per year, the pledge doesn’t seem so menial. Aside from raising funds, Common Goal also aims to raise awareness for the other dimension of the game – football as a force for good.

The network of charities cultivated by streetfootballworld and supported by Common Goal represents over 120 organisations, with more than 6,000 professionals, working in over 80 countries to serve 2.6 million disadvantaged children and young people. The initiatives of these organisations range from educating slum children in Kenya to advancing gender equality in India to facilitating refugee integration in Germany. In each of these communities, and many more, football is making a massive difference in people’s lives each and every day.

Over time we aspire to make Common Goal an industry-wide movement, where the pledge becomes the norm not only for players and managers but also clubs, leagues, and associations. While many of our supporters are inquiring about the addition of other sports or entertainment sectors to the movement, given the size of the football industry, unlocking even one percent of the profit is a huge project in and of itself. Common Goal is about more than just raising funding and giving back, but also about setting an example and thinking meaningfully about social responsibility. Jürgen Griesbeck, CEO of streetfootballworld and Founder of Common Goal, spoke the honest truth when he said “It took Juan’s courage to take this first step to kick it off, but it will require all of us to see it through.”

The next milestone we hope to reach is to sign one percent of all active football players to the movement. We believe that with Common Goal we are only at the beginning of a global movement, but the enthusiasm in and around the initiative is truly contagious. Together, we are building a future in which the world’s favourite sport becomes the world’s greatest catalyst for social change.
MEET ANGAZA

Angaza Sports and Development Centre is a community- and youth-driven non-governmental organisation (NGO) based in Thika town, 40km from Kenya’s capital city, Nairobi.

Founded in 2008, Angaza registered as an NGO in 2009. The organisation uses sport as a way of bringing youth and children together to participate in sports activities while delivering opportunities, skills, knowledge in Education (scholarships awards, mentorship and inspiration), Community outreach (community leagues, crime, drug and substance abuse, environment, HIV/AIDS, child safeguarding, conflict resolution, life skills etc), a Digital Learning Centre (animation, photography, filming, community e-library, computer training, soft skills, micro-enterprise and exchange programmes), girls’ empowerment (girls forums, Go sisters event, life skills), Football Academy and Social Enterprise, where we make customised beads.

All this aims at achieving a positive and healthy life. Angaza upholds the power of sport as an all-terrain vehicle for addressing the above interventions and has already impacted more than 2500 youth between 8–23 years.

VISION

“Youth and Sports developed through world class sports and development programmes.”

MISSION STATEMENT

“To be the leading professional sports organisation in Kenya, providing effective sporting and social inclusion initiatives for youth and children.”

KEY MILESTONES

Angaza’s interventions since 2010 to date have shown positive developments in the lives of children and youth, as well as local communities. Here an overview of the organisation’s impact:

• Initiated the only community football league for the U10, U12, U14 and U17 youth in Thika, reaching more than 50 teams and 1250 youth and children. This has increased youth participation and improved sports skills for the youth.
• Through our Education programme, 12 beneficiaries have benefited from scholarship awards, mentorship and inspiration.
• Started digital learning centre offering computer trainings, exchange programmes, community e-library, photography, animation, photography, micro-enterprise and soft skills.
• Started football academy for U10, U12, U14 and U17 years. This year, the U14 team reached the Copa Coca Cola finals, representing the whole of central Kenya.
• Leadership development; Angaza is founded and run by the youth themselves, by giving youth opportunities to lead.
• Community engagement and involvement; parents and community leaders are now involved in development work in Thika; this was facilitated by using the youth to bridge the gap and actively engage their parents in community work.
• Improved HIV/AIDS and life skills awareness among youth. In 2008, the majority of the youth could not make informed choices about their life. Angaza began integrating this into Sports programmes; currently, 50% of active youths are aware of the fundamental life skills.
• Gender balance; Angaza believes in advocating and engaging both genders in its development work.
• Established local and international networks. Since the organisation was started, it has managed to attract very important local and international partners and networks.
Childreach Nepal is registered as a local non-governmental organisation in Nepal and is also part of the global network of Childreach International, United Kingdom (UK). Founded in 2009, the organisation currently works in the districts of Bhaktapur, Dolakha, Kavrepalanchok and Sindhupalchok, in partnership with local government schools, communities and the Government of Nepal. Childreach Nepal’s football programmes are being implemented in local schools. So far, 15 projects have been carried out and have allowed children and youth to engage in debates around social issues.

The organisation’s aim is to improve the access to education and healthcare, protection and livelihood of children and their families in Nepal by working in partnership with government community schools, civil society and the government.

Parallel to that, Childreach Nepal has been implementing its football programmes in partnership with 24 government schools focusing on issues like education, employability, gender equality, health, peace building, social inclusion and youth leadership.

The project aims to increase children’s attendance at school and combat gender discriminatory behaviour both in school and in the community through a sport for development curriculum.

Furthermore the organisation intends to transform public schools into community hubs, not only by organising football for good programmes once a week, run by young leader teams. Creating separate community centres would have been a competition to the schools; in addition, the schools are already a contact point for all the parents; there is an existing relationship between the students, the teachers and the parents that can be utilised for their community outreach.

In this sense, CRN does also not directly work with the parents, but through the teachers, especially those who are being picked as youth leaders. The organisation has just recently started to use football (through a training by Slum Soccer) and otherwise employs the Coaches Across Continents curriculum.

Childreach Nepal considers using football as the central methodology to keep children safe in schools. Football is used as a medium between the teachers and the local youths through mentoring, in order to initiate change within the community and in schools; towards gender, equity, socio-emotional skills, health, Leadership in Action and livelihood.

Childreach Nepal’s football sessions take place on Friday afternoons. The school offers its ground and the time for physical activity. 60 participants benefit from 2 hours per week of Childreach Nepal’s football sessions. The enrolled children are aged 11-18.

Two young leaders are selected in each school – one student, one teacher (one male, one female) – who are trained and run the weekly activities. A mentor is selected from the community, who is the first contact point for the young leaders in his or her district(s) and ensures that activities are being implemented regularly. Likewise, youth leaders and mentors run awareness-raising campaigns within the communities, alongside organising sports festivals that highlight issues affecting girls, including child trafficking and the need for gender equality and continued attendance at school.

Girls’ participation is encouraged through the ‘Ask for Choice’ curriculum. Trained monitoring Officers (core Childreach Nepal staff) lead the project and the training of the mentors and youth leaders. Furthermore, regular meetings with mentors and young leaders take place.
Diogenes is a non-profit organisation which launched the “Kick Out Poverty” campaign in Greece in 2007. The main aim of the campaign is to provide support to the most vulnerable members of Greek society. Homeless people, people in drug rehabilitation programmes and asylum seekers are the groups in focus, while social integration/social inclusion through sport is the core aim of Diogenes. Raising public awareness on the issues of homelessness and getting people actively involved in various forms of activities against social exclusion is another key aim of the campaign.

Since 2007, Diogenes has run the Greek National Homeless Football Team which every year participates in the Homeless World Cup – a sporting but mainly social global movement that uses the power of football to energise people to change their own lives. Through football and a series of other activities, people are supported and encouraged to address a broad range of issues that affect their lives. These include people’s rights and education, the promotion of good health, fair play, anti-discrimination, social change and social integration.

Every week 30-40 players attend the training sessions of the Homeless National Team at Athens’ Rouf Stadium. The team also has one match a week in a 16-team amateur league and takes part in other tournaments. The participants are a mix of Greek homeless people and refugees. However, all members of the community are welcome. There are further training sessions for participants in other cities in Greece, such as Volos and Thessaloniki.

As part of the UEFA Foundation for Children Refugee Support Programme, Diogenis has held football training sessions and tournaments across the country in refugee reception centres. Where no pitch is available on site, the organisation brings along its portable football pitch. The programme has reached over 700 beneficiaries aged 14 and above. In addition to delivering football sessions, Diogenis has also provided the refugee reception centres with football kits and equipment.
FEDEX AND UEFA FOUNDATION FOR CHILDREN DELIVER GAME CHANGING ‘FIELD IN A BOX™’ TO POLAND
FeDEx, the UEFA Foundation for Children and streetfootballworld have teamed up once again to roll out an artificial turf field in Mrągowo, Poland.

After joining forces in 2016 to provide the children and youth of Cañada Real Galiana in Spain with a safe place to play, FedEx, the UEFA Foundation for Children and streetfootballworld have teamed up once again to roll out an artificial turf field in Mrągowo, Poland.

Since becoming Main Sponsor of the UEFA Europa League, FedEx Express (a subsidiary of FedEx Corp) has collaborated with the UEFA Foundation for Children and streetfootballworld to implement a programme of community projects using football as a platform for social change.

The first successful initiative near Madrid, Spain, has prompted the world’s largest express transportation company to expand its support of the football for good movement and keep the pitch turf rolling – last August in the direction of Mrągowo, a town in the heart of the Masurian Lake District of northeastern Poland.

“The decision to build this football field in Mrągowo has already elevated the aspirations of people here,” enthused Arkadiusz Kamil Mierkowski, from local charity Młodzieżowe Stowarzyszenie Inicjatyw Sportowych (MSIS), “Our aim for this pitch – to become a football training facility – means the pitch will not just benefit young people who use it, but will also allow the teaching of football to spread beyond Mrągowo and have a broader impact in Poland.”

MSIS – a streetfootballworld partner in Poland – is responsible for maintaining the pitch in the community and ensuring its sustainable use.

On 31st August 2017, the artificial turf pitch was inaugurated at an official opening ceremony.

Members of the local community, representatives from FedEx, the UEFA Foundation for Children and streetfootballworld were joined by the Mayor of Mrągowo, UEFA ambassador and retired Polish goalkeeper Jerzy Dudek.

“We saw the positive impact putting a playing field in a community can have for people who live here” - David Binks, President of FedEx Express in Europe and CEO of TNT

“As Main Sponsor of the UEFA Europa League, FedEx aims to use its involvement in professional football to connect with people on a personal level. We saw in Cañada Real, the positive impact putting a playing field in a community can have. It’s rewarding for FedEx to open a second pitch here in Mrągowo, and feel the optimism surrounding a project we know can open up new possibilities for people who live here,” said David Binks, President of FedEx Express in Europe and CEO of TNT.
FedEx team members were able to share the excitement over the community’s new pitch, participating in the opening day football3 training session and tournament with local young players.

The methodology, developed by streetfootballworld, aims to develop life skills such as dialogue, respect and team work. “Football has a proven ability to bring people together and change lives,” commented streetfootballworld Network Director, Vladimir Borkovic, “We’re grateful that organisations like FedEx, who are affiliated with football at a professional level, extend their support to the football for good movement and recognise, not just the need, but the potential for projects like ‘Field in a Box™’ and football3 teaching methodologies to impact young people in communities like Mrągowo.”

The ‘Field in a Box™’ initiative is funded as part of ‘FedEx Cares’ - a broader pledge by the company to invest 200 million US Dollars in more than 200 communities by the year 2020. Plans to expand the programme include additional pitches on three continents - ensuring FedEx will continue to complement its professional football sponsorship with locally beneficial initiatives around the world.

“We are delighted that FedEx’ approach to social responsibility aligns with the football for good movement. As a global logistics business that is committed to giving back on a local level, FedEx is naturally positioned to expand the ‘Field in a Box™’ programme on to other continents. Together we look forward to improving the lives of young people through football, not just in Europe, but in underserved communities globally,” said Pascal Torres, General Secretary, UEFA Foundation for Children.

After celebrating the one-year anniversary of the ‘Field in a Box™’ in Spain, and the opening of this second pitch in Poland, FedEx can look forward to helping many more young people access the playing field - by delivering it right to their doorstep.
From 14th – 18th September 2017 the football3 Festival 17 brought young people from all over Europe together in Germany’s infamous carnival city: Cologne. Their football kit, however, was no disguise. These young players proved that they were not just enthusiastic footballers, but truly good sports. United by the event’s official motto “Celebrating Diversity”, they met on the pitch in mixed teams and set about breaking down barriers and scoring goals, as well as collecting plenty of fair play points. The most important goal of the festival: to promote cultural understanding and to overcome prejudice.
Festival 17 was hosted by streetfootballworld network member rheinflanke together with streetfootballworld to champion the power of football for good and positively impact the lives of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The event was made possible thanks to funding from the German Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI) and The Coca-Cola Foundation, main sponsor of the festival and streetfootballworld partner supporting the Germany-wide “football3 bewegt” programme.

“With football3 streetfootballworld has developed a concept that promotes social skills in a highly effective way and also promotes the integration of children and young people from refugee families into their host societies. These are causes we gladly support,” said Uwe Kleinert, Head of CSR Coca-Cola GmbH on behalf of The Coca-Cola Foundation.

“Only with the generous support of our partners from the private and public sectors can we stage innovate cultural formats like Festival 17. The aim of this festival is to promote intercultural exchange and to empower disadvantaged young people through the football3 methodology,” said Johannes Axster, Associate and Head of Partnerships at streetfootballworld, and continued: “Projects like this allow us to expand the scope of our partners’ impact in the field of social responsibility through sport and enable young people from challenging backgrounds to play an active an engaged role in society.”

The organisers received further financial support from the European Union’s Erasmus+ Programme, the DFL Foundation, the Lukas Podolski Foundation, the Til Schweiger Foundation, Pro Sky Group and the Gold-Kraemer-Stiftung.
The day before the official kick-off of Festival 17, an advance party of young people arrived in Cologne to pave the way for the other participants: The “Young Leaders”, a group of 18 – 30-year olds from different football for good organisations, had been especially selected to prepare their delegation’s contribution to the festival and act as mediators during the football3 matches. For them, it was a valuable opportunity to step up and take responsibility, act as role models and apply their experiences upon returning to their home communities.

Under the guidance of the hosting organisations and Young Leader Coordinators from the Deutsche Soccer Liga and Hamburger Sportjugend, the Young Leaders were prepared for the key role they would play in the delivery of the festival. To be equipped for the days to come they had to both grow as a team and brush up on – or, indeed, acquire - their football3 skills. Before they were introduced to this unique football methodology and trained as mediators, they first needed to get more acquainted with one another. To do so, RheinFlanke’s Stephan Hülsmann challenged them to perform a series of activities. From walking across a narrow plank to diving through a giant replica spider’s web without touching the sides, he not only put the group through their paces but succeeded in breaking, even melting, the ice. After much laughter, fooling and falling around, it was time to proceed with the next items on the agenda: an introduction to football3 and mediator training. As well as taking note of the theory in the workshop room, the group braved the indecisive Cologne weather to test what they had learnt on the pitch. Little did they realise, a surprise guest had arrived to watch them in action: football3 Ambassador and Borussia Dortmund midfielder, Sebastian Rode.

Interested to find out how football had shaped the Young Leaders’ lives, Sebastian asked them to share their own stories and news from their communities. Visibly touched by their testimonials, the Dortmund star left with fresh motivation for his role as football3 Ambassador.

“I hope that the Young Leaders and participants get the most out of the festival, learn some valuable lessons to take home with them,” Sebastian said and encouraged them to “keep on playing football3 and always remember to have fun playing sport, respect the rules and, of course, each other.”

The following morning, the delegations of 15 – 18-year olds and their older delegation leaders began to descend upon the festival venue, Cologne’s ZAK Circus and Artistry Centre. After settling in at the youth hostel that would be the home of the entire festival crew over the next few days, they flocked to the circus tent for some welcoming words and in great anticipation of which team they would be allocated to.

“KEEP ON PLAYING FOOTBALL3 AND ALWAYS REMEMBER TO HAVE FUN PLAYING SPORT, RESPECT THE RULES AND, OF COURSE, EACH OTHER” - SEBASTIAN RODE, FOOTBALL3 AMBASSADOR AND BORUSSIA DORTMUND MIDFIELDER

“The main focus of the festival is to promote intercultural understanding and overcome prejudice,” streetfootballworld’s George Springborg explained afterwards. “To do so, we have divided the young players up into mixed teams in which girls and boys from different organisations play together.”

CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

“THE MAIN FOCUS OF THE FESTIVAL IS TO PROMOTE INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING AND OVERCOME PREJUDICE” - GEORGE SPRINGBORG, STREETFOOTBALLWORLD

“Keep on playing football3 and always remember to have fun playing sport, respect the rules and, of course, each other.” - Sebastian Rode, football3 Ambassador and Borussia Dortmund Midfielder.

YOUTH FORUM

The main focus of the festival is to promote intercultural understanding and overcome prejudice,” streetfootballworld’s George Springborg explained afterwards. “To do so, we have divided the young players up into mixed teams in which girls and boys from different organisations play together.”

“Keep on playing football3 and always remember to have fun playing sport, respect the rules and, of course, each other.” - Sebastian Rode, football3 Ambassador and Borussia Dortmund Midfielder.
FESTIVAL GAMES

The newly formed groups headed outside to take part in the “Festival Games”, a series of fair play activities the Young Leaders had been instructed in the day before and would now help the young participants to perform. The aim of the games: to transform the teenagers who had previously never met into teammates.

“Activities like these are important when it comes to bringing groups together, because cooperation and teamwork is required to successfully complete them. These also play a key role on the football pitch – if you want to win the game, you must work together and communicate,” RheinFlanke’s Stephan Hülsmann commented.

The team-building exercises were the first of four main activities composing the “Cultural Exchange Programme” to provide participants with an understanding of football3 as well as a multicultural learning experience.

For many of the 15 – 18-year-olds Festival 17 would not only be the first time that they had set foot onto the pitch to play football3, but also their first encounter with a new city or country. Lead by streetwise and Cologne-based RheinFlanke staff, the entire festival crowd set off to explore the host city. Keeping the vast flock of people together was no easy feat but proved easier than expected. The group even managed to simultaneously board a single tram – to the astonishment of both the other passengers and the festival-goers themselves.

After visiting the city’s most prominent landmark, the towering cathedral of Cologne, strolling through the streets and crossing a gently swaying bridge over the River Rhine, the party streamed into a restaurant for their first dinner together and to cement newly formed friendships. But not before an ample amount of group photos and selfies had been taken along the way.

CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS

Following a day of familiarising themselves with football3, the festival participants continued to celebrate diversity off the pitch. An evening of cultural presentations allowed the group to learn more about their newfound teammates and share stories about their own homes, traditions and projects.

A number of delegations took centre stage to present their backgrounds in a variety of creative ways. Photo and video tours of Hamburg and Dublin revealed that the cities have a number of similarities – first and foremost, their citizens’ frequent battles with the elements. A Hungarian dance performance had the dancers spinning and the crowd applauding. The Polish delegation quite literally gave the audience a taste of their culture – testing and positively surprising the teenage palates with their local delicacies. To connect the dots between places and cultures the delegation from Spirit of Football told the remarkable story of how they took a football around the world on a journey to promote fair play and understanding, gathering so many signatures along the way that the ball was almost completely black with ink.

MORE THAN FOOTBALL

Diversity was also the name of the game on the fourth day of Festival 17. To broaden their cultural – and physical – horizons and learn some new skills, the 15 – 18-year-olds had the opportunity to take part in a selection of workshops together with RheinFlanke participants from programmes around Cologne. With a variety of activities, such as ultimate frisbee, acrobatic yoga, header table tennis, freestyle football, breakdance, balancing on daffy boards, graffiti, all on offer, selecting just two was not an easy task.
The football3 tournament was the highlight and grand finale of the festival and took place on 17th September with supporters and partners of the event arriving to cheer the teams along. North Rhine-Westphalia’s State Secretary for Sports and Volunteering, Andrea Milz, kicked off the opening match.

“Sport, integration, culture and social engagement – Festival17 brings them all together,” Andrea Milz enthused and proceeded to watch from the sidelines as the tournament unfolded.

Sebastian Körber, Associate at RheinFlanke, added his views as one of the festival hosts: “For us this is a wonderful initiative: to enable cultural exchange through sports and football and expanding this experience on a European wide level through the partnership with streetfootballworld,” explaining that, “For young people such encounters are invaluable, quite simply because they show them that diversity doesn’t hurt, but enriches life.”

MEDIATION OF THE FOOTBALL3 TOURNAMENT

During the football3 tournament, the Young Leaders played a vital role as mediators, putting their communication and mediation skills to the test – a thrilling but also highly challenging duty.

When the players met during the first and third halves to define the rules and award each other points after the game, the Young Leaders were on hand to facilitate. This was when many of the key lessons of the entire festival were learnt. “I hate discussion,” exclaimed one of the young girls when asked why she shied away from expressing her criticism of the opposing team’s behaviour on the pitch. “It is ok to disagree,” Young Leader Charlotte Beutler said encouragingly and explained that having a different opinion didn’t automatically signify conflict.

After some fast-paced football and animated exchange, the team “Football R Us” secured the overall title as tournament champions. “In football3 you need more than goals to win: you can only do so if you combine football skills with fair play”, streetfootballworld’s George Springborg noted after the team’s 4:5 victory.

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY AND THE END OF FESTIVAL 17

As the event drew to a close, who had won the tournament became irrelevant. It was time to swap football boots for dancing shoes and celebrate each other: with a final few rounds of the festival dance choreography.

Over the past few days, the participants had adapted to unfamiliar surroundings and learnt how to communicate with others from different backgrounds and with whom they didn’t share a common language.

“I think it’s really cool that I got to meet so many people and make a lot of friends over the past four days,” said 15-year-old Saady Essa from the Spirit of Football delegation, who had come to Germany two years ago as a Syrian refugee. “We all wanted to play together,” he added, “it didn’t matter that we came from different countries. Football doesn’t need a language. Football is our language.”
Sebastian Rode was born on 11th October 1990 in Seeheim-Jugenheim in South-West Germany. He began playing football almost as soon as he could walk. “My mother always says: ‘From a young age, all you ever wanted to do was kick a ball,’” Sebastian notes smiling. From the local village club, he kicked his way further and further to the top until, one day, playing professionally became more than just a dream. Sebastian made his debut for Kickers Offenbach in 2009, later playing for Eintracht Frankfurt and Bayern Munich and signing with Borussia Dortmund in 2016. He has represented Germany at the U21 level and is a DFB trophy winner.

During the football3 Festival 17 in Cologne he paid a visit to the Youth Forum much to the delighted surprise of the Young Leaders. He sat down with the 18 – 30-year-olds from across Europe to listen to their stories of how football has impacted their lives. In return, they had more than a couple of questions for him. From social responsibility in the Bundesliga, listing the fair play rules he would introduce to the professional game, to what he and his teammates talk about in the locker room. No stone was left unturned.
AN INTERVIEW WITH SEBASTIAN RODE

FOCUS: EUROPE

The motto of Festivalth read “Celebrating Diversity” – how can football contribute?

Football, and sport in general – football because it is so popular the world over – simply connects people. It doesn’t matter if you understand each other and don’t speak the other person’s language, on the pitch you understand the rules. You know how the game works and most people just come together, have fun and then the rest is easy.

What do you like most about football?

That it is such a simple, straightforward game. Anyone can play. There are few other sports like that. All you need is a pair of shoes and even they aren’t that important... you really need is a ball. At school we used to use shoes to make a goal. So you really don’t need much to play football. Perhaps that is why it is also one of the most popular sports in the world – it is so easy to play and the rules are clear.

What is your favourite football memory?

It’s from when I was playing for Eintracht. When we made it into the Europa League on the final match day. There was a moment in the stadium... our opponent Leverkusen was playing in Hamburg and when Hamburg scored the equaliser it was shown on the big screen and the whole stadium started cheering together with us players on the pitch. Right after that we also scored securing our place in the Europa League. It was an incredible moment!

You’re an ambassador for football3 on the one hand and on the other hand you see Paris-Saint-Germain pay 222 million for Neymar. How is it for you to be in this slight conflict between football for development, social integration and this big economic bubble you’re all in? How is it for you yourself? Is it an inner conflict?

Yeah, it’s crazy to get that much money for one player and it’s not the end at the moment. Hopefully smaller clubs also benefit from these big transfers and are able to invest more in youth development and new players.

How is it in your team, when you say “I will go to Cologne because I support this festival” - do the other players have questions? do they ask “What is it exactly that you are doing?”

I think most of the players don’t know that I am here and I also didn’t know that Neven was here (Editor’s Note: to support an other RheinFlanke project, not Festival 17). It’s not talked about often in the team, only sometimes. Of course, Neven was on some television shows and we saw him and were aware of what he was doing then.

I would like to know if you think that teams in the Bundesliga are investing enough in social responsibility and are taking their social responsibility seriously?

I think that, particularly with regard to Dortmund and all who are associated with the club, that they are already very engaged in social responsibility. But I also believe that much more can still be done, especially when it comes to engaging the players themselves. As a footballer you focus on training and a match at weekend, but I think the club could oblige players to be more engaged and offer them a selection of projects to do so that fit into their schedule. It could be something in the Dortmund region, not necessarily even in another part of Germany, to save travel time. I decided to engage myself quite early on. For example, preventing violence is important to me and I try to get involved in different projects as often as possible.

How do you deal with fair play as a professional? Because, as an example, professional players use tactical fouls, which are really against the rules but are also accepted. How do you deal with that?

For me fair play is very important, also the behaviour towards the referee is very important, but, of course, if someone does something strange I can also get frustrated, but most of the time I try to respect them very well because of the crowd and the pressure from it. Fair play is important, but of course, sometimes a tactical foul... (laughs)... is necessary. You don’t want to hurt the other person and it’s not about life and death but it’s about a lot, so it’s necessary sometimes.

If you could implement or decide upon three fixed fairplay rules in the Bundesliga, which ones would that be?

I think after a foul the player who fouled should go to the other player and give him the hand, to respect each other. I think most of the time the coaches scream at the referee and I think that’s not good behaviour from the coaches and everyone can see it so that crowd also gets upset.

What’s your biggest challenge in terms of professional football?

I think in football it’s also like a rollercoaster. Sometimes, for example, Mario Götze will be hyped and then it all collapses, because everyone wrote bad things about him. Yeah, it’s difficult. If you are Messi you are only on a high level, but for us it is easier to live with it, you earn a lot of money and with a lot of money life is easier, of course. But “normal life” can also be a rollercoaster ride. If you are injured it is a bad time. At the moment, I am injured. It’s very frustrating. Things are not always on the up.

Who were or are your role models? What did you learn from them?

When I was young, it was always Thomas Rosicky because Dortmund was my favorite club and he played there as well. When you become a professional footballer you observe a lot of the players who play in the same position... Bastian Schweinsteiger or Andrés Iniesta. I look at how they behave on the pitch, react in certain situations and when they are under pressure. You learn a lot by just observing.

You said that in life, things are not always “on the up.” What has been a particular challenge for you and what did it teach you?

Someone once advised me to quit the school. It was when I was in 12th grade. I was told that I should concentrate on football because I had signed a professional contract with Offenbach and at the time, I had even moved schools to Offenbach to be able to train more. After only three weeks I got injured with an anterior cruciate ligament rupture... that meant a break of six, seven months. So, I always explain to young people how quickly a football career can be over with an injury. That is why football is not all highs – you also have to deal with injury, with setbacks.

What motivates you?

Quite simply the enjoyment of the game and being successful with the boys on the pitch. Attaining your goals as a team is a much better experience than achieving something alone.
#Proud2Play

NEW PROJECT KICKS OFF WITH THE SUPPORT OF U.S. SOCCER STARS

42% OF ALL YOUTH WHO IDENTIFY AS LGBT FEEL THEIR COMMUNITY DOES NOT ACCEPT THEM. THESE YOUTH ARE TWICE AS LIKELY AS THEIR PEERS TO BE PHYSICALLY ASSAULTED IN SCHOOL.

streetfootballworld has teamed up with top football stars to launch a groundbreaking new initiative that is designed to create safe and supportive football environments for vulnerable youth who identify as LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender).

Proud2Play is an online digital toolkit developed by streetfootballworld and network members America SCORES and Grassroot Soccer, with support from leading LGBT advocacy organisation Athlete Ally.

Proud2Play’s goal is to create safe environments for over 36,000 youth across North America and the Caribbean (NOCA) by empowering football coaches with the skills and knowledge they need to fight discrimination.

Youth from underserved communities who identify as LGBT face many challenges including discrimination, exclusion and violence. For many of these young people, the football field is the only place where they feel they belong and their coach may be the person they confide in before their friends or family. This creates a responsibility and opportunity for our network members to understand the issue and to ensure they create safe environments for youth. To date, no specific curriculum has been created in the sport for development and peace-building sectors to help them do this – as streetfootballworld network members related at the 2017 NOCA Network Workshop in Atlanta, USA.

“We have an opportunity to create real, meaningful change for LGBT youth in communities across the region,” said Sean Hinkle, Director of the National Program Network for America SCORES at the workshop, “We are all hungry for change. We just need the tools.”

Proud2Play will use real-life experiences to create a practical, interactive toolkit that will educate and empower community football coaches in the NOCA region and beyond. Together with high-profile ambassadors from professional football, streetfootballworld and its partners will visit communities across the NOCA region to speak to youth and coaches in order to develop a digital curriculum to tackle these issues. Video storytelling will be used to create practical guidelines for coaches and also to generate public visibility for the project on social media.

We have assembled a world-class team that includes experts in policy, education, youth-based programming and curriculum design to create a toolkit that is adaptable and transferable. As well as partnering with network members Grassroot Soccer and America SCORES, streetfootballworld will also be working with over 20 professional footballers to help deliver and spread our message.

MEGAN RAPINOE CHAMPIONS “Proud2Play” PROJECT

One of the star players supporting the Proud2Play project is streetfootballworld Global Ambassador Megan Rapinoe, a World Cup winner and Olympic champion with the US Women’s National Team who is openly gay and has been a long-time advocate for equal rights.

“My coach helped me to get my feelings out because I couldn’t talk to anyone else. Having a coach who understands you is very important. They know what you’re going through and can help you get through it and that’s just the best thing you can have” - Latoya, Harlem Soccer Project, New York
In 2016, streetfootballworld welcomed World Cup winner and Olympic champion Megan Rapinoe as one of its very first Global Ambassadors. Last September she made public that she had joined the Common Goal movement and was pledging 1% of her salary to football for good charities.

As a long-time advocate for equal rights, Megan is now also championing the streetfootballworld “Proud2Play” project. She recently sat down with us to discuss the importance of providing “safe spaces” and “allyship” in youth sports environments and share her own experience of tackling discrimination in – and with – football.
Why did you decide to support Proud2Play?

For me it’s a no brainer to support something like this. Growing up in these sports, becoming a professional athlete, being gay, being out, I’ve seen the incredible impact that I’ve had just in saying that I’m gay. I get kids or parents or other people coming up to me all the time just thankful for speaking out on it and for using my platform. Often times people don’t have the resources that I have, they don’t have the platform that I have and I feel like it’s my responsibility to do what I can and to use the platform that I have to try to... it sounds kind of cliché…but make the world a little bit of a better place.

As you mentioned, coming out had a great impact on your life and also on many people. What made you decide to come out publicly?

I came out in 2012. I had been a professional player for about three years, I’d always been very open in my life with my family and my friends and becoming a professional athlete and becoming more popular, being on the national team and having the platform grow, but also having more eyes on me, it started to feel uncomfortable that I wasn’t out. It started to feel as if I was omitting something or hiding something and it wasn’t something that I wanted to hide. It wasn’t like I needed to scream it from every rooftop, but I also wanted people to know. It is part of my story, it’s who I am and I think sports pushed me towards it a little more because I was in the spotlight.

Why do you think it was so important to come out at that time?

The reception was really positive when I came out. Obviously all my teammates, coaches, family and everyone knew, but I think it was at a time, and we are still at that time, when people really want that. I think that the country still very much needs that, the LGBT movement needs that, the people need that and the kids very much need it. We need people to come out and say it. In this country we glorify sports and sports figures and also other famous figures in general. I think that it’s really important to use their platforms to bring as much information and knowledge as possible, break down stereotypes and create a new norm.

Sport was a big part of your life growing up. How do you recall that experience? Does sport provide an open and inclusive environment for young people who, in a way, feel a bit different?

Looking back on my youth sports experience, I didn’t have any explicitly negative experiences but I also didn’t have anyone who was openly talking about LGBT youth or about that being a possibility. It was just, I guess, generally assumed that everyone was straight. For me, it probably wasn’t until college that those things were even discussed or that that was even brought to my attention.

Typically and historically, I don’t think sports in general have been a very safe space. In maybe Seattle or San Francisco there has been a lot more emphasis in the education system on LGBT issues or just more acknowledgement of LGBT existence, but there are many parts of the country where that is not the case and there’s no such education, there’s not the acceptance and there aren’t the tools and isn’t the knowledge provided for coaches.

You talk about a “safe space”. How would you define the term?

I would define a safe space as a place that’s inclusive to all people. I think when we talk about LGBT, and especially LGBT youth, I think it needs to be explicitly clear what we mean: you can’t just say, ‘oh it’s a safe space, everybody’s welcome.’ It needs to specifically signal to those kids: gay kids are welcome, trans kids are welcome, lesbian kids are welcome, all of these different types of kids and identities that people want to claim are welcome. It needs to be said that that’s ok and to use the appropriate language and be respectful of the way that they want to be identified and the way that want to be spoken to and really signal to these young people that a safe space is somewhere where you can be who you are. Our actions and our language and our knowledge of these issues should also support that and make that the standard for everybody who’s involved in the safe space.
“ALLYSHIP IS ALSO INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT. I THINK OFTEN TIMES IT’S A CASE OF ‘YOU DON’T KNOW WHAT YOU DON’T KNOW’. YOU DON’T KNOW IF THERE’S A GAY KID ON YOUR TEAM WHO IS STRUGGLING. YOU PERHAPS DON’T EVEN KNOW THAT THE “SAFE SPACE” ISN’T QUITE THERE UNLESS YOU TALK ABOUT IT.”

What do you think is the main challenge?

A huge problem is lack of knowledge. Lack of knowledge or views. Sometimes it is a problem of views, that can be very conservative or not inclusive.

Sometimes it is lack of knowledge just because you don’t think you have any gay kids on the team or you don’t think it’s an issue and you kind of say: ‘Listen we have an open environment’, but maybe we haven’t opened that door enough. Maybe the kids don’t know the right language to use, they don’t know the right way to bring things up, and maybe they don’t know that the language they are using isn’t as inclusive as the environment they would want to create. I think just opening up those doors and breaking down those stereotypes and giving people as much knowledge as you can is really important.

And where do you see the solution? How do we make youth spaces and youth sports spaces more inclusive?

First of all, in these youth spaces and youth sport spaces it is important to give more information, materials and knowledge to the people that are in charge of running programmes – managers, coaches, mentors; and also to parents. We need to give them something tangible, almost some kind of template, because a lot of people don’t know, for example, the right language to use. They want to be more inclusive, they want to have that kind of environment but they just don’t know how to do it. I think it would be really powerful, at the beginning of the year, for example, to have meetings with the team, share information with the kids and the parents and set a standard and communicate the kind of environment we want to create: a respectful environment, a very inclusive environment.

Allyship is also incredibly important. I think often times it’s a case of ‘You don’t know what you don’t know’. You don’t know if there’s a gay kid on your team who is struggling. You perhaps don’t even know that the “safe space” isn’t quite there unless you talk about it. Of course no one is going to say: ‘Oh no, we don’t want any gay players on our team’ – that’s taboo. But it’s also the case that you can’t just wait until someone comes out to then create a safe space. It really doesn’t work like that. I think that if we can signal early on to people – especially to LGBT youth – that there is a safe space, then you can create allyship around that and then you can have kids that aren’t LGBT who understand and support it and have the tools to openly welcome the kids.

You mentioned the coaches a few times. What role can coaches and mentors play in the lives of the children and young people they are training?

I think coaches and mentors are absolutely invaluable in the lives of these kids, when you think about how many kids are playing sports and the amount of time that they are spending in sports. If you think that they practice three or four times a week for two hours with this person that they probably look up to, they are involved in something that they love doing, then the coaches are in a mentor role, then it’s really important to have a good relationship and there’s just so much influence that that person can have in a positive way for these kids that can really help them develop and develops them into the people that they’re going to become. You are spending an incredible amount of time with these people in the very formative years of your life and that relationship that you build with them and the influence that they have on you and that can be so special, important and impactful for these kids.

In the context of what we are discussing today, and specifically of this idea of creating safe spaces, what should coaches be aware of in this position of influence?

I think it’s really important for these coaches and these mentors that these kids are spending a lot of time with, to be knowledgeable about issues of LGBT inclusion and language. I think for kids at that age, especially for LGBT kids who are already feeling different, and perhaps that they’re not “normal” or not like everyone else, it is important to have the proper language and knowledge, to really speak to them. Often times it can be unintentional to set up an environment where they don’t feel as included as they should.
At this time in their lives, LGBT kids are already going through a transformative period and it can be a very difficult period for them figuring out who they are, so to be able to be in a sports environment with their coaches and their mentors, and for those coaches and mentors to signal to them very explicitly that they are whatever they identify as, that they are supported and included is very impactful at that age.

Do safe spaces exist in professional sport?

I think it’s unrealistic - especially when you look at male sports - to think that all the lip service is just going to be enough. I mean, obviously male athletes don’t feel comfortable coming out otherwise more would be out and I’m sure there’s more than just Jason Collins and Robbie Rogers and Connor Burts, you know there’s obviously more than that. So our safe spaces in professional sports aren’t really there. It’s everyone’s job to make sure that we are creating a space where people do feel comfortable and, until that happens, we have a lot of work to do.

What are the contributions that sport can bring in promoting and advancing the LGBT movement?

When we talk about sports it is always about how it brings people together from all walks of life, from different neighbourhoods, from different states, different countries around the world, and it’s this great equalizer of all things that brings the best out in people. I look at that in terms of LGBT equality and how it can create safe spaces for kids and for professional athletes. In particular for kids, because if we look at the amount of kids that are playing, it has a great potential to really break down a lot of stereotypes and barriers that have plagued the movement for equality and plagued people’s lives and really created a lot of negativity.

I think sport has an amazing ability. You have 10 or 15 or 20 people all on the same team fighting for the same goal. We all pull up our shorts the same way and lace our boots up the same way and extend that to LGBT equality and the fight for equality and treating everyone with respect and I think it can be really powerful.

Sport is, by its nature, an inclusive thing. I think programmes like Saturday Night Lights that get kids out of the environment that they are used to all the time and maybe out of the environment where they don’t feel comfortable talking about who they are and into an environment where they are not only exposed to sports and the other players and the other teams, but they are exposed to mentors and coaches who are trained in these things and they have the knowledge and they have a big brother, big sister figure who can signal to the kids that this is a safe space for them and they can really be who they are and they can talk about these things. Sometimes it’s just nice when you can be out of your normal environment where you feel so different and have always felt so different and step into a different environment where someone can tell you that you are great just the way you are and that how you are is exactly how you are meant to be. That gives you extra confidence and can be an incredibly special thing. It can give you a lot of confidence and a lot of security in who you are and help you to believe in yourself.

What is your message to others in a position to support “Proud2Play”?

You should partner with this initiative because the impact that you can have is so, so great and we’re not talking about the immediate impact or just a few kids, but we’re talking about shaping people’s lives for the future. And those people are going to grow up into adults and then help other people and this is going to shape more lives and help them be their best selves for the rest of their lives and help change the community one by one. I think that often times when we look at huge social issues, it’s just so daunting, like: “How do we even get involved?” But get involved with one person, get involved with one community, with one neighbourhood, with one programme, with one team and then let that grow. I think it’s important to really think about all the small things that we can do, because sometimes the big things just seem daunting. You can’t fix it all in one day, or all at one time, but you can make an impact wherever you go. I think that that’s really important to think that everyone has responsibility to be involved in this fight and be involved in equality and be involved in making the world the best place that they can make it.
THE STORY OF YFC RURKA KALAN FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF TWO YOUNG LEADERS

Read the stories of Jaspreet Kaur (27), a Rurka Kalan villager, former beneficiary and current YFC Rurka Kalan staff member and Moritz von Hirschhausen (18) from Germany, who spent five months at the organisation as a volunteer. In their own words, they share their personal experiences of the work and impact of the non-profit organisation that gave them both life-changing opportunities.
I want to tell you my story. My name is Jaspreet Kaur and I am from the village of Rurka Kalan located in the Jalandhar district of Punjab, northern India. I live there with my younger brother and my parents. Our family struggles with money, as my father, who works as a labourer, is the only bread-winner. Joining Rurka Kalan changed my life. But let me tell you first how I got there.

Thanks to financial support from my cousin, I managed to study and complete a post graduate course (per correspondence) at the Guru Nanak Dev University Punjab, India. After finishing my studies, I was searching for a job and my friends gave me some advice: “Jaspreet”, they said, “you should take your resume to the Youth Football Club.” So that is what I did. I had an interview with Mr. Gurmangal Sir, who deployed me as a teacher at the Govt. Girls’ Primary School in Rurka Kalan.

I have now been working with YFC since 19th September 2013. I have been teaching, as well as training girls in the basic skills of football. Slowly, these girls have improved their work and have shown a lot of changes in their overall development. The girls’ parents, school teachers and some of the villagers, told me how they appreciated my work. My life took a wonderful turn when I was selected for the Youth Leadership Camp in Tokyo, Japan, in March 2015. It was an amazing and unforgettable time for me and family. My family and I are very thankful to YFC, as it was due to their support that I was selected.

Because of this, the people in my village have started to respect me and my family. Now many girls’ parents allow them to come to the football ground to play. I am currently working with 50% girls and 50% boys in the field of “Sports for Development”. Because I didn’t get married two or three years ago, things would have been hard for me if it hadn’t been for YFC. Gurmannal Sir, the CEO of YFC, believed in me, he said “Jaspreet, you can do it.” He helped me develop, so I then wanted to develop the girls in my community, so they wouldn’t have to face the same problems I had to face. Between 75 and 100 girls go to training daily. If I had not joined YFC, they would not have this chance.

Today, I work at YFC as a Training and Monitoring officer. I run the sessions of different age groups like U-14 Boys and girls, U-17 boys and U-19 Boys. Constantly on my mind is that I strive to do my work with honesty and dedication. These two words - honesty and dedication – shape my life. I am always trying to find new ways of improving the development of kids; I know that if we all work with dedication and honesty, we will one day be successful and achieve better results. I have seen the power of Sports for Development - through it, our U-14 girls have become a football team. In future, I want to continue being a leader and inspiration to children and adults alike.

Jaspreet Kaur
In April 2017, 18-year-old Moritz von Hirschhausen left his hometown of Hamburg in Germany and boarded a flight to New Delhi. He would spend the next five months as a volunteer at streetfootballworld’s network member organisation “Youth Football Club Rurka Kalan” (YFC) in the Punjab. There, he worked as a football coach, teacher and helped with tasks at the organisation’s office. The volunteering programme was made possible thanks to streetfootballworld and their broad network of partners all around the globe. In this piece, he shares his experience at YFC Rurka Kalan.

**Away Game**

**The Story of Moritz**

At first, there was the unknown.... This was my first taste of India. Upon arrival at Phagwara train station - amongst all of those hustling along the platform - I had no idea whom I was going to meet. It was late, the light was fading and I had no idea what to do. At that very moment I felt insecure about the adventure I was about to embark on. But as soon as someone sporting a YFC T-Shirt came towards me and greeted me warmly, the insecurity disappeared and would not return again during the whole of my volunteering programme. I was escorted to my lodgings in the village Rurka Kalan (the organisation was named after the village because of the tight connection it has to the people who live there) and fell asleep immediately.

The next morning, I met the founder of YFC, Gurmangal Dass, who gave me some history of the organisation. He told me that, in 2001, he founded YFC Rurka Kalan with the goal of creating livelihood opportunities for children and youth from rural backgrounds in the state of Punjab using a sports-based methodology to convey the importance of health, education and gender awareness. These three topics are the basis of most projects that are being run by the organisation today. “The area has had a long history of drug abuse which has caused deep-seated problems for the last generations,” Gurmangal explained. In 66% of families, there is at least one member addicted to drugs. This development has led to a large percentage of unemployment, so that young people “had nothing to do.” Gurmangal said that he could not simply watch local youth squandering their potential, as “having nothing to do” is a culture of fitness and health. At the YFC centre in the state of Punjab using a sports-based methodology to convey the importance of health, education and gender awareness. These three topics are the basis of most projects that are being run by the organisation today. “The area has had a long history of drug abuse which has caused deep-seated problems for the last generations,” Gurmangal explained. In 66% of families, there is at least one member addicted to drugs. This development has led to a large percentage of unemployment, so that young people “had nothing to do.” Gurmangal said that he could not simply watch local youth squandering their opportunities and decided to intervene by offering them an alternative purpose.

The organisation offers free-of-cost services to children participating in their varied programmes. At the core of YFC, there is the vision of promoting a culture of fitness and health. At the YFC centre in Rurka Kalan as well as in 20 sub-centres all over the state, children receive daily football sessions at the local ground. These include football-specific skills, but also cover topics ranging from body awareness to realising the importance of fair play. These sessions are supported by workshops held at the facilities, where the participants learn about healthy nutrition as well as “Sexual and Reproductive Health problems” (SRH). Once during lunch, my fellow volunteer Mark told me who his team not to put more sugar on top of their meal for dessert. They looked at him and simply didn’t understand, because no one had ever informed him about healthy nutrition before. This shows the importance of educating participants on these subjects in addition to the subjects taught at school.

What a nice experience this was – just by creating the right opportunity, relaxed interaction was able to develop....

Recently, the organisation has initiated the school outreach programme, where local schools include sports session created by YFC in their curriculum. This will give young children the possibility of developing necessary motor skills and teach them about healthy living. This combination is the key to YFC’s impact, because there are only few programmes in the area that offer sports activities and realise the importance of education at the same time. During my time at YFC, I helped in developing the first YFC sports curriculum for these “Sports-for-Development” sessions. I would accompany the coaching staff of YFC to various primary schools in the vicinity, where we watched the local teacher carry out their sessions. After this, we would give feedback on their performance and explain to them the content of the new session for the coming week.

The main part of my time was spent at the YFC headquarters in Rurka Kalan. My tasks were wide-ranging. I trained the local Under-16 boys team, which was comprised of village players as well as players recruited to the YFC academy. These players from the whole of Punjab combine sporting prowess with good behaviour and are awarded free-of-cost board and lodging at the YFC hostel.

We met up at the ground for two sessions daily, the
I hope that some of you have been inspired to go and make a change in some of these children’s lives – they are definitely worth it!

First one at 5:30am before school, the second one at 5pm, when the temperatures were starting to be bearable (at least for me, who was not used to the climate – but only in the beginning…). The focus in these sessions was to develop a strong team for the participation in tournaments at local and state levels.

I also tried to address each player individually by working on specific strengths and weaknesses and also including fitness and tactics into the sessions. This work was the highlight of my time there. Seeing the boys with fiery eyes early in the mornings because they were eager to play was always very rewarding. In addition to the sports programme, I helped to develop a curriculum which YFC has established to support the boys in their education.

Leaving YFC at the end of my stay there was very hard for a number of reasons. Most of all, I had grown close to all of the children and staff there. To realise that you are not going to see them again soon is not easy. Moreover, it is your responsibility to keep in touch and visit, because they do not have the opportunity to travel. But in my opinion, this is also part of the volunteering experience, seeing people with fewer possibilities and getting to know them on another level. I must admit, I have become part-Indian during my time and already miss the food, the culture and so many things about the way of life there. Furthermore, we had a lot of things still planned which could not be carried out during my time there. Reflecting on all of this, I am very glad I had the opportunity to spend time at YFC, because the impact of these organisations can only truly be seen and supported from there and the experience is not comparable to anything that I could have done in Germany or elsewhere.

For everyone contemplating to go abroad, I can recommend YFC for such a project. It is a great feeling to become part of this dynamic team very quickly. You can give new input and work together with the local staff depending on your fields of expertise. But not only human resources are needed, there also needs to be financial support for YFC to achieve their goals in the next three years to institutionalise and scale their school outreach programme. Then more children would be able to profit from YFC projects. For this purpose, my fellow volunteer Mark and I are trying to form a “Friends of YFC” group, primarily located in Germany and the rest of Europe, where friends and benefactors of the organisation have the opportunity to exchange ideas and increase the support coming from Europe.

We hope to find many people interested in aiding this worthwhile project with their donations of time and/or money. Everyone is invited to be part of this movement in India aiming to improve the lives of children from marginalized or impoverished backgrounds. Only then can the vision of YFC be fulfilled with the support of streetfootballworld.

For my part, I will follow the development of the organisation with great interest and hope to return to Rurka Kalan one day soon. I would like to thank all the supporters from YFC and streetfootballworld that have made my time in India so exciting and I hope that some of you have been inspired to go and make a change in some of these children’s lives – they are definitely worth it.

Moritz von Hirschhausen
“I WANT TO BE THE NEXT MANDELA!”

ANTONY GITEI
YOUNG LEADER FROM TYSA, KENYA & MEMBER OF THE STREETFOOTBALLWORLD YOUTH COUNCIL

READ HOW FOOTBALL IS BRINGING ANTONY GITEI FROM KITALE IN KENYA CLOSER TO HIS DREAM. KICK BY KICK.
“THE ONE SINGLE LESSON I WOULD WANT TO SHARE WITH OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE IS THAT IF WE COME TOGETHER HAVING ONE COMMON GOAL, WHICH IS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE, AND IF WE UTILISE OUR DIFFERENCES IN ABILITIES AND USE THEM TO CHANGE THE NARRATIVE OF YOUNG PEOPLE, THEN WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.”

Elected as one of the five members of streetfootball’s Youth Council on 1st of July 2016, organising the first ever Youth Summit for the East Africa network last December and kick-starting his leadership programme TYSA’s Young Leadership Academy (TYLA), Antony Gitei Gathiru already has an impressive CV in the field of football for good at only 26 years of age.

As the first-born of three brothers, it is easy to think that he was destined to be a leader. But as a native of rural Trans Nzoia county in Kitale, where many people struggle to make a living from small-scale farming, the course of his life wasn’t so straightforward. Though his family were among some of the more fortunate able to offer their children an education, Antony had to battle tribal divides and his own insecurities to get where he is today.

Elections in August and, while the situation appears calm, it spurs him to reflect on the vote ten years ago. In 2007, political tensions re-enforced ethnic divisions. Following the ballot on the 27th December, the country erupted into post-election violence.

With 44 tribes and about as many languages, Kenya is a diverse country. While, like the majority of the population, Antony and his family belong to the Kikuyu, in Kitale, they are the minority. For fear of attack, they fled to relatives in the heart of the country until the conflict abated.

“Many people were killed or evicted from their properties,” Antony remembers.
THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAYING

Shortly after he and his family returned to Kitale, Antony heard about TYSA, the Trans-Nzoia Youth Sports Association (now rebranded to Transforming Young stars of Africa) through friends and joined the organisation in 2008 as a participant and a volunteer. On the pitch, he met and teamed up with young people from different tribes and backgrounds.

“You don’t think about what the other person in your team has that is different from you when you are kicking the ball,” he says. “You don’t even remember that you don’t share a language, you don’t even remember that you come from different places. When you are kicking the ball, you all have a common goal.”

Another great benefit of the football programme, Antony recalls, was that it “gave me a space to come and play.” At school, he remembers, he had always eagerly awaited breaktime, when he could play and discuss with his classmates. He feels that there wasn’t enough time to play and explore opportunities beyond academic achievements. “School”, he says, “was only about study and homework. For me, the pitch is a school of life.”

“School”, he says, “was only about study and homework. For me, the pitch is a school of life.”

Youth members of TYSA had to rise to the challenge and take on responsibility. This vote of confidence made him keen to take up training sessions. Though it was his first assignment as the group leader, he was the youngest member of the delegation from TYSA. Antony was assigned to be the group leader.

In Uganda, one of Antony’s favourite football memories was formed. It was the first time he played the sport with people from different countries, spelling his first “international match”, as he calls it. “The fact that someone from Uganda, someone from Tanzania, someone from South Sudan, someone from Kenya were playing together in one team was so encouraging. We can all be unified by football,” Antony enthuses and adds: “Before that I didn’t believe that was possible.”

BELIEVING IN A DIFFERENT FUTURE

After leaving school with average grades, Antony was disheartened and lost belief in his abilities and gave up the hope of pursuing his dreams. Almost. “Without TYSA, I would have given up,” he says, “the 26-year-old admits. The current CEO of TYSA, Gichuki Francis, whom Antony came to regard as “more than a father,” helped him back onto his feet and into his world of opportunities through football: “He made me believe in myself again, he gave me an opportunity to grow,” Antony says.

The opportunity of training others in sport and life skills inspired him to grow himself, and he enrolled in a college course before later going to university to study for a degree, after all.

Another opportunity came in the form of a ticket. It would take him to Uganda in 2010 for a leadership training session. Though it was his first assignment and he was the youngest member of the delegation from TYSA, Antony was assigned to be the group leader. This vote of confidence made him keen to rise to the challenge and take on responsibility.

Travelling to Uganda was also the first time Antony had ever left his native country and experienced a different culture beyond its borders. “The first thing I noticed,” he says, “was that we may speak a different language, but we are all the same. We all have the same challenges as young people, we all have the same drive.”

The theme of the workshop was “Making young people count” aimed at finding ways of giving young people a voice. Antony quickly found his forte, as he says, “I was always good at debating,” he laughs and remembers that, at school, he would have heated discussions both in the classroom and on the playground.

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FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH FOOTBALL3

A year later, Antony was introduced to streetfootballworld’s football3 methodology at a training session for the East Africa network. “At first I was surprised that girls and boys could play in the same team. I was so used to ‘standard football’, where you only have boys playing in one team and girls in the other team.” The other aspect of football3 he found challenging was that the game is played without referees. “If you make a mistake, you have to admit you made a mistake. In other football, if the referee doesn’t see, you don’t admit to it,” he laughs.

At the time he asked himself “Can we really play like this?” The football3 method of playing football was so unfamiliar that Antony felt eager to learn more and try to succeed at something new.

“One thing that football3 has taught me is that we can be able to play together and solve our own problems. Be able to play as a team and solve problems by discussing, it doesn’t take an argument to solve a problem. You can discuss a problem and, in the process, accept your mistakes, correct and move on.”

PLAY HAS PLAYED AN INSTRUMENTAL ROLE IN MY LIFE,” ANTONY STATES GRATEFULLY, “IT IS THROUGH PLAY THAT I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO INTERACT WITH OTHER PEOPLE, IT IS THROUGH PLAY THAT I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO REALISE THAT I CAN BE A LEADER, IT IS THROUGH PLAY THAT I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO REALISE OTHER POTENTIALS THAT I HAVE INSIDE ME.”

“ONE THING THAT FOOTBALL3 HAS TAUGHT ME IS THAT WE CAN BE ABLE TO PLAY TOGETHER AND SOLVE OUR OWN PROBLEMS. IT DOESN’T TAKE AN ARGUMENT TO SOLVE A PROBLEM. YOU CAN DISCUSS A PROBLEM AND, IN THE PROCESS, ACCEPT YOUR MISTAKES, CORRECT AND MOVE ON”
TYLA – TYSA’S YOUNG LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

“YOUNG PEOPLE ARE NOT A PROBLEM, BUT A RESOURCE THAT CAN BE USED TO TRANSFORM COMMUNITIES AND SOCIETY”

Today, Antony “borrows football” to train the participants of TYSA’s Young Leadership Academy. TYLA is a non-formal educational project aimed at empowering young people and providing them with the skills they need to become competent leaders and transform their communities. The students are between the ages of 15 and 18 and are recruited from local schools. Antony drew up the curriculum and recruited his very first cohort last year. 30 participants from 10 schools joined the three-year course and will graduate to use their expertise at local development organisations.

The programme begins with one week of football and life skills training, community mapping and surveying, Antony explains. The young people are assigned the task of talking to young and older members of their communities and asking them what their problems and hopes are. Back in the group, they compare notes and brainstorm solutions and, in the following week, all must devise a work plan to implement throughout the rest of the year in their communities.

“There are a number of common issues,” Antony tells us, “Lack of basic education, illiteracy, child neglect, poverty.” The progress of each student’s work plan is tracked at quarterly intervals.

In a bid to reshape the situation of young people in East Africa, Antony helped to organise the “East Africa Youth Summit” that took place in Kigali, Rwanda, in December 2016. It was hosted by local streetfootballworld network member Esperance. For two days, the participants exchanged ideas and reflected on how to better engage young people in sport for development organisations.

Aiming Higher and Further

Antony once almost let his perceived failure at school deter him from striving towards his dreams. After realising his first goal by enrolling at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology to study towards a degree in Electrical and Electronics Engineering, he is now aiming higher and further.

“I want to inspire more young people all over the world,” Antony tells us, “My biggest dream is to work at the U.N. headquarters in New York in their youth office. I want to champion the issues of young people not only in Africa, but in the whole world,” Antony says and can hardly contain his excitement. We wish him the best of luck! This is a story to be continued…
FOOTBALL IN HISTORY
TWO GERMANYS, ONE GAME

DURING THE 28 YEARS OF THE COUNTRY’S DIVISION, EAST AND WEST
GERMANY PLAYED AS SEPARATE FOOTBALL TEAMS. AMIDST RISING COLD
WAR TENSIONS, THE 1974 WORLD CUP BROUGHT THE TWO TOGETHER ON
THE PITCH – FOR THE FIRST AND ONLY MATCH IN WORLD CUP HISTORY, WHERE
EAST AND WEST GERMANY WOULD EVER FACE EACH OTHER.

Following World War Two, the ensuing geopolitical tensions between the powers of the Eastern and Western Blocs that developed into the Cold War became painfully apparent in the division of Germany. The deep rift the East-West divide had carved into its landscape turned Germany into the centrepiece of the conflict.

It was only through the Basic Treaty of 1972 that East and West Germany had even recognised each other as sovereign states. Though the decade had also initiated a process to normalise interaction between them, political relations remained precarious.

When in 1974 the World Cup was hosted by West Germany the tournament brought its Eastern neighbour across the Iron Curtain to participate. The teams also found themselves in the same group along with Chile and Australia.

“EVERYONE THOUGHT THAT WE HAD NO CHANCE AND WE JUST
WANTED TO PROVE TO THE WORLD THAT WE COULD PLAY FOOTBALL”
EAST GERMAN MIDFIELDER, BERND BRAUSCH

For both German teams, the World Cup got off to a good start: West Germany defeated Chile and Australia, while East Germany won against Australia and scored a draw in the match with Chile. It was in the final group match that the two German teams would finally come face to face for one of the most politically charged games of all time.

While the West German team were deemed hot favourites playing at home and as defending European Champions, the East Germans were sorely underestimated. “Everyone thought that we had no chance and we just wanted to prove to the world that we could play football,” said East German Midfielder Bernd Brausch. Though it was true that the East German team had little international experience and its players all had other jobs beyond the football pitch, they could also boast past successes, like an Olympic bronze at the 1972 games.

As the stadium clock showed 7:30pm and the referee’s whistle got the ball rolling, players from both sides felt the importance of the game. Expectations were high, but the first half proved a disappointment. Though both sides had opportunities, neither managed to score and the teams left the pitch at Half Time with a 0:0 draw.

During the second half West Germany dominated the field, but still was unable to send the ball into the net of their opponents. Then, in the 82nd minute, East German Striker and Magdeburg Player Jürgen Sparwasser managed to weave his way between three West German defenders and kick the ball past the West German goalkeeper Sepp Maier. With no further goals in the final minutes, the game ended 1:0. Against all of the odds, East Germany had won not only the match, but also the group title. The West German team would, however, later erase the memory of their defeat by winning the tournament.

Many years later, the two German teams were once again drawn to contend against each other in the qualifiers of the 1992 European Championship. But, before the match could take place, political events overtook them: the Berlin Wall fell, Germany was reunified and its two teams became one.
THROUGH THE LENS OF JUAN MATA & EVELINA KAMPH

THE MANCHESTER UNITED STAR AND COMMON GOAL PLAYER TAKES US ON A PHOTOGRAPHIC JOURNEY TO DISCOVER FOOTBALL FOR GOOD IN MUMBAI, INDIA, WHERE HE BECAME INSPIRED TO JOIN THE COMMON GOAL MOVEMENT.
“I believe in football’s unique power to change the world. Change is possible and the path is real. I’ve seen it in so many places around the globe. And, of course, I experienced it in India not long ago. In the streets and in the parks of Mumbai. Under the burning sun, or in the monsoon rains. I’ve seen it in their eyes, those kids with eyes full of hope, and through their smiles. Those amazing smiles. I will never forget them.

Sometimes, life can be difficult. Especially for those unfortunate to be born and raised in underprivileged circumstances. Like in some parts of India, and in many other countries.

But there is hope. Football has changed my life, and can do the same for many other people. Solidarity, respect, equality, passion. Let’s act together and bring these values to every single place. Let’s help through our beloved sport. Because, in fact, it is not just a sport, but a tool for social change and integration. It is, indeed, the most powerful force to unite people, and we all can be part of it.

These pictures are a reflection of my experience in the heart of Mumbai, thanks to streetfootballworld and Oscar Foundation, one of many football-based charity members of Common Goal. I experienced first-hand the amazing job that Ashok and his team are doing in the slums of the country’s largest city. And I hope that through these photos, you can feel it, too. They are changing lives. You can change lives, too. Join Common Goal and make this world a better place.”

Juan Mata
“As you can imagine, we met many Manchester United supporters during our time in India. The power of football around the world is unmatched.”

LOCATION: DHOBI GHAT, CUFFE PARADE, MUMBAI.

“An organised mess. A pretty accurate way to describe this huge unmechanised laundry facility that every day takes care of clothing shipped from Mumbai’s hotels, hospitals and offices.”

LOCATION: DHOBI GHAT, CUFFE PARADE, MUMBAI.
“In one of the more exclusive areas of Mumbai the local residents had agreed to lend their communal football pitch to the Oscar Foundation once a week. Unphased by the overwhelming heat, you could tell the kids were excited to play on a better turf.”
“An overwhelming number of residents, nearly 60,000 people, live in the maze of narrow streets that make up this central Mumbai slum. These people might not have a lot, but their genuine generosity and how they wholeheartedly welcomed us into their homes, we will remember forever.”
On a blazing hot day, we got to take part in an Oscar Foundation football training session, where importance was put on promoting admirable values such as gender equality, communication and understanding. In a matter of minutes, the kids had managed to turn a simple sand pitch into a field of pure joy, only through their sheer passion for the sport.
Throughout our trip, we couldn’t stop thinking about how extremely fortunate we are. That’s one of many reasons why we are determined to keep giving a hand to those who need it the most. Thank you for travelling with us through the lens of our camera. The Common Goal journey has just begun.

FORT, MUMBAI

“Throughout our trip, we couldn’t stop thinking about how extremely fortunate we are. That’s one of many reasons why we are determined to keep giving a hand to those who need it the most. Thank you for travelling with us through the lens of our camera. The Common Goal journey has just begun.”
ENGAGING GERMAN FOOTBALL PLAYERS AND COACHES IN SOCIAL CHANGE

GUEST ARTICLE BY STREETFOOTBALLWORLD PARTNER

DEUTSCHER FUSSBALL BOTSCHAFTER

(German Football Ambassador)

Germany is a leading nation in the world of football. German players and coaches are also involved in the sport all over the world. Their successes have extended far beyond the pitch, with many using the beautiful sport to kick-start positive social change.

In 2013 the organisation “German Football Ambassador” ("Deutscher Fußball Botschafter") was founded with the mission of honouring German coaches and players for their engagement in social initiatives both at home and abroad. These activities, in turn, contribute to enhancing the positive image of Germany around the world. The organisation depicts football not only as a game but as a tool to unite different cultures, communities and causes.

How did it all begin? Creative thinking inspires ideas and ideas inspire change. As the founder of the “German Football Ambassador initiative”, Roland Bischof, once stated: “On the one hand, enforcing sustainable ideas in the long term, usually requires a (positive) madman, to continue regardless even when things get difficult. On the other hand, it also takes partners who believe in such a madman. “

Roland Bischof, the “madman” who came up with the idea in 2011, traveled to nearly a hundred countries – among them Sudan, Burkina Faso, Korea, Uganda, Israel, China, Jamaica, Qatar, Namibia, Nepal, Spain, the Philippines, USA and Singapore. They  were nominated in three different categories.

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The Main Award ("Coach" category) has been given to professional trainers such as Horst Kriete, Jürgen Klinsmann or Monika Staab. A list of past Audience Award winners ("Player" category) includes Bastian Schweinsteiger, Mesut Ozil or Sami Khedira. The Honorary Award has been granted to personalities, such as Miroslav Klose, Karl-Heinz Schnellinger and Thomas Hitzlsperger. The awards are presented together with prize money to be donated to socio-cultural projects of their choice in the countries where they are active.

Football has often been portrayed as “merely” a game. However, irrespective of geographic region or social cause, this captivating phenomenon has proved its ability to impact and change lives. To further grow this initiative, the “German Football Ambassador” has been partnering with different entities, such as the German Federal Foreign Ministry, Goethe Institute, Kicker magazine or streetfootballworld.

Since 2013 more than 20 projects have been supported worldwide by this initiative in several countries – among them Sudan, Burkina Faso, Korea, Uganda, Israel, China, Jamaica, Qatar, Namibia, Nepal, Spain, the Philippines, USA and Singapore. Together with “streetfootballworld”, versatile projects have been selected to achieve a higher impact - something to which we consistently strive. A project selected in collaboration with streetfootballworld, among many others, took place in Israel 2015, where Michael Nees, the coach of Israel’s U-21 national team, supported the Peres Center for Peace. The Peres Center for Peace is a non-profit, non-political NGO focused on promoting lasting peace and advancement in the Middle East by fostering tolerance, economic and technological development, cooperation and well-being, all in the spirit of Shimon Peres’ vision. Our nominee, Michael Nees, decided to support the Peres Center’s “Twinned Peace Soccer Schools” programme, which aims to instil principles of equality, diversity and respect in Israeli and Palestinian and Jewish and Arab children and youth through the medium of football, by fostering values of peace and coexistence and changing attitudes toward the “other”, while diffusing stereotypes.

As Roland Bischof has stated: “I am enthusiastic about the cooperation between German Football Ambassador and streetfootballworld, not only due to their vast engagement with several projects but also their intertwined values and vision that both organisations promote.”

Moreover, one of the most recent projects - “Beyond the Field with Horst” - the winner of the Main Award (Category “Coach 2017”) Horst Kriete has chosen to support, took place in South Africa. The prize money is being used to strengthen grassroots football in the regions, buy festival promotion equipment, organise festivals to promote football and recreation around the country. Furthermore, the aim was to engage more those affected by social ills such as xenophobia, racism and tribalism as children there are the worst hit victims.

German Football Ambassador strongly believes that football can bring people together and can improve many areas and lives. Thus, we are proud to be part of this undertaking and will rigorously continue engaging in further social causes. Hence, we would like to thank “streetfootballworld” Founder and CEO Jürgen Griesbeck and his team for supporting this initiative and sharing the same vision that football has the power to change the communities we live in.
From 2nd – 6th November 2017, young football enthusiasts from across Latin America are bringing their united football force to Buenos Aires, Argentina, and teaming up for the “Festival Latino Americano de Fútbol”.

23 delegations from 11 Latin American countries have traveled to the capital of Argentina, a country with no shortage of football legends to its name – from Diego Maradona to Lionel Messi. The young festival participants are taking to the pitch as the champions in the league of football for good. Hosts of the festival are streetfootballworld together with local organisation and network member Asociación Civil Andar.

The underlying goals of the festival – to foster youth empowerment, gender equality and social inclusion – reflect the objectives of football for development in the region and have been integrated into the agenda:

FOOTBALL3 TOURNAMENT

The focal point of the festival is a tournament played following streetfootballworld’s football3 methodology, where values such as fair play, gender equality and respect are as important as athletic skill. The teams consist of a mix of male and female players from different organisations.

MIXED TEAMS

Mixed-gender teams

NO REFEREES

Players resolve conflicts themselves

RESULT

A final score that isn’t just about goals

ABOUT FOOTBALL3

3 TIEMPOS

PRE-MATCH

A pre-match discussion for teams to agree on the rules

MATCH

A post-match discussion to reflect on the match and award each other fairplay points

POST-MATCH

A post-match discussion for teams to agree on the rules

THE HOST

ASOCIACIÓN CIVIL ANDAR

Asociación Civil Andar is an organisation devoted to generating innovative opportunities to develop the potential and the participation of people with disabilities. Through a combination of work experience, sports, arts, culture, and health-related activities, the Asociación Civil Andar helps this vulnerable group out of exclusion.

The Liga de Fútbol Inclusiva (Inclusive Football League) uses the inclusive power of football to promote and foster the active participation of people with disabilities in society, while also addressing stigmatisation and prejudice.

PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

The festival is possible thanks to the support of: Adidas Argentina, Secretaría de Deportes de la Nación, Fundación Estudiantes de La Plata, Club Atlético de San Lorenzo de Almagro, River Sin Barreras, Asociación del Fútbol Argentino, Sheraton Hotel, Fundación Danone, Fundación Recha Bus, Weber Saint-Gobain, Municipio de La Plata, sindicato Argentino de Televisión Transportes La Perlita, Asociación de Fútbol Argentino.