

Displaced Children and Youth

Position Paper

1. Problem and Opportunity Statement

By mid-2020, almost 80 million people (1% of the world's population) were in the status of forcibly displaced, worldwide, as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order. This figure includes 26 million refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) - half of whom are under the age of 18 years. (<https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/figures-at-a-glance.html>)

Access to basic services such as health care, education and employment opportunities are severely under pressure for displaced children and youth. Opportunities for self-reliance, decision-making power, youth empowerment and building strong leadership roles often seems out of reach. Without a venue to support the creative and innovative minds of children and youth, whole generations risk being left behind. It is important to make sure the world does not leave behind these children and youth, and their potential to contribute to their local community, wherever they may find themselves.

61% of all refugees are living in urban areas and as an urban-based street sports organization focusing on the empowerment of youth and children, GAME is well-positioned to take an active role in improving opportunities for displaced persons, including (but not limited to) refugees.

2. GAME's Position

Sport is an enabler of sustainable development and offers tools to support human inalienable rights - GAME's position is that these tools must also be available for displaced children and youth. GAME offers an education for young people as street sports coaches and role models based on life skills and empowerment. This gives the opportunity for young individuals to lead trainings in street sports for displaced children youth and to be role models in civil society and inspire the children and youth in a setting of displacement.

Displacement is a crisis for the individual and society as a whole. GAME actively seeks to implement its activities where it can benefit displaced children and youth and strengthen social cohesion within the host communities, whether this be in urban areas, official refugee camps or settlements.

GAME partners with local and international organizations who ascribe to a similar position. GAME also cooperates with the UNHCR (the United Nations Refugee Agency) and other relevant UN agencies on a global and local level, in order to access viable data and promote international coherence of all GAME projects related to or relevant for displaced children and youth.

Inclusion is key in all GAME programs. GAME firmly believes that displaced children and youth should be able to thrive and not just survive, and gives great value to promoting integration between children and youth with different backgrounds.

Crises, including conflicts and natural disasters, produce displacement across borders but also within countries. It is necessary for national, regional and international response to address the totality of the problems displaced persons face.

GAME addresses all categories of displacement and all of those in between and beyond the categories. Everybody is always welcome in all GAME programs – this Position Paper and accompanying Policy spell out how GAME will address the extra attention and support displaced children and youth often need.

3. GAME's Key Actions

GAME provides innovative solutions to social challenges caused by displacement and weak social systems working within the humanitarian development nexus. Using human-centered design methods, GAME takes the needs, desires and opinions of displaced persons into account when developing program activities and policies. GAME ensures in-country operations according to UNHCR recommendations, and is always in contact with local UNHCR offices, where relevant. If applicable, GAME works accordingly to local refugee/migration law.

Through a participatory approach/project design, displaced persons are included in the project design and can represent their needs and recommendations. All programs, including those not specifically designed for/by displaced person, will always accept the participation of displaced persons – all GAME activities and facilities welcome all people without discrimination, in any country of GAME's operation.

GAME works actively with Sustainable Development Goal 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) by conducting educational awareness programs teaching skills that promote peacebuilding. Sport activities are a unifying language. GAME promotes inclusion and reduces inequality, when providing an unbiased platform youth can relate to. Moreover, sport creates common goals and interests between participants, which helps overcome differences. This promotes peaceful co-existence, which is needed when working with displaced children and youth.

4. What has GAME achieved so far

GAME has since 2002 been actively working with children, adolescents and youth from disadvantaged areas with a high concentration of refugees, new arrivals, and those displaced.

GAME has built a protection roadmap for refugees, including consultations, service mapping, referral pathways, child and family participation, identifying and addressing harmful practices, inclusion, and monitoring, learning and evaluation.

GAME is using participatory design processes in programs working with displaced children and youth to include their perspectives in all parts of the program from designing facilities, to co-create new components to GAME's Playmaker program.

For more information on GAME's work with displaced children and youth please refer to our Annual Report, and our Displaced Children and Youth Policy:

<https://game.ngo/who-we-are/publications/>

5. GAME's Areas of Development

GAME has identified the following areas for development:

- Increasing partnerships with international and local NGOs specialized in working with displaced children and youth, from the strong base we already have in every country of operation.
- Continuing to grow the institutional relationship with UNHCR and the Olympic Refugee Foundation.
- Investigating alignment with Sphere Standards, EU Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, Core Humanitarian Standards and/or relevant standards to professionalize GAME's work as a whole and with displaced children and youth especially.
- Developing program inputs specifically tailored to and by displaced children and youth.
- Investigating a Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) component linked to GAME's Playmaker program in cooperation with competent technical partners in order uphold a do no harm principle when working with children and youth who have gone through or are still going through displacement.

6. Global Alignment

GAME uses the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol as a reference framework, while recognizing definition issues have presented themselves in recent decades. GAME will also refer to the Guiding Principles of Internal Displacement 1998, and the Global Compact for Refugees.

GAME consults the advice offered in the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) - a key component of which is the idea that refugees should be included in the host-ing communities from the very beginning.

GAME also works ambitiously with UN Sustainable Development Goals, including reducing inequality within and among countries (SDG 10), Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (16), Gender Equality (5), and Partnerships (17).

GAME works according to the criteria of the Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS).

GAME works towards adhering to the Sphere Standards, European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid and in general reflects work according to International Humanitarian Law.

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Finally, GAME utilizes and refer to the Sports for Protection Toolkit developed by UN-HCR, Terre des Hommes and the Olympic Refugee Foundation for field delivery and training, and offers them to staff and volunteers through GAME's educational resources.

