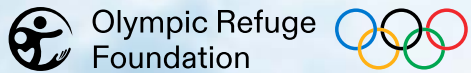


ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT 2025



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Credit: Generations for Change Cyprus
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FOREWORD

2025 was a pivotal year for the world, and for the Olympic Refugee Foundation. Conflict and displacement continued to impact millions of lives, while the systems designed to support them faced increasing pressures as multilateral aid underwent profound shifts. In this context, we paused, reflected, and sharpened our focus.

Our strategic thinking, developed throughout last year, was guided by years of learning alongside partners and communities, co-developing ideas, and helping to shape a global movement committed to the belief that young people affected by crisis can thrive again through sport.

At the heart of our work is a conviction backed by growing evidence. Sport, if delivered in a safe and inclusive manner, can be an impactful complement to essential humanitarian services. For young people still in the formative stages of their lives, it can restore well-being, offer protection, strengthen resilience and promote inclusion. It is a solution to which practitioners and policymakers should give serious consideration, and one that communities can own.

Our role is to support grassroots sport and aspiring athletes, gather the evidence, and use it to advocate for systemic change. This means cultivating credibility at every level, from community playgrounds to global policy tables.

We cannot do this alone. We are deepening existing partnerships and forging new ones, with cities, with coalitions, and through our Think Tank, which catalyses the knowledge and ideas that drive flagship initiatives like Sport Coach+. By acting collectively, we can go further and wider.

This year, we also refreshed our core principles: centring the voices of affected communities, promoting local leadership, committing to continuous learning, and pursuing solutions that are sustainable for people and planet alike. We are proud to carry these values as central to our work, and as part of the Olympic Movement.

In a time of multiple, overlapping crises, the Olympic Refugee Foundation will not stand on the sidelines. Guided by our belief in sport's power to protect, include and connect, we stand ready to rise to the challenge.



Jeroen Carrin
Head of the Olympic Refugee Foundation



Credit: UNFPA

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ABOUT

OUR VISION

We believe in a society where everyone belongs, through sport.

OUR MISSION

To shape a movement that ensures young people affected by displacement thrive through sport.

OUR GOALS

1. Sports systems at local, national and international levels are safer, more supportive and more inclusive of individuals and communities affected by crisis, including displacement.
2. Sport is systematically embedded in responses to individuals and communities affected by crisis, including displacement, at local, national and international levels.
3. Sport drives greater awareness and more positive perceptions of individuals and communities affected by crisis, including displacement, fostering empathy and solidarity at local, national and international levels.

OUR STRATEGY

2025-2030

The ORF’s 2025-2030 strategy aims to improve the Foundation’s effectiveness, and sharpen our focus on the way in which we work. Over this strategic period we will balance the need for innovation, programme sustainability and systemic transformation.

We will focus on three strategic pillars which form the framework for our strategic plan:

1. CATALYSE

Catalysing or accelerating new ideas.

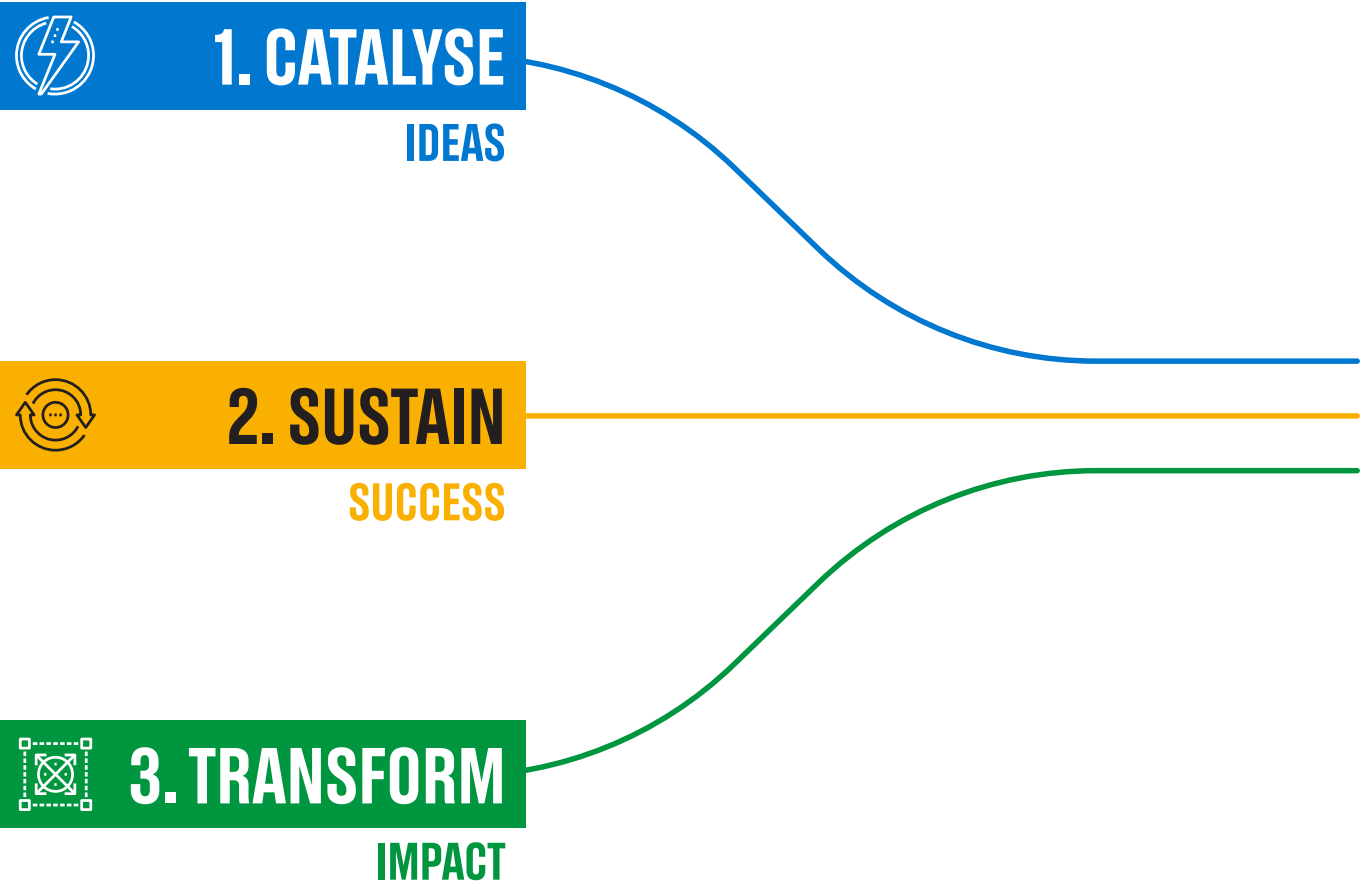
2. SUSTAIN

Sustaining and consolidating proven initiatives.

3. TRANSFORM

Creating transformative change in the humanitarian-sport ecosystem.

Each pillar is distinct, but they are also designed to flow into and reinforce one another. Ideas piloted under ‘Catalyse’ feed into longer-term work under ‘Sustain’; and the evidence and momentum we build there positions us to ‘Transform’ systems.



1. CATALYSE



IGNITING NEW IDEAS, TESTING INNOVATIVE APPROACHES AND BACKING PROMISING PRACTICES.

The Catalyse pillar represents the ORF’s creative and entrepreneurial core. It’s about moving quickly, taking smart risks, and creating the conditions for innovation to emerge – especially where existing systems aren’t reaching displaced young people. This is where we develop and test new ideas – small, promising, with big potential.

OUR APPROACH

The ORF aims to fill innovation and implementation gaps where others are not positioned or resourced to do so, carrying out our mission with high energy and commitment. We will:

- 1. Identify gaps and opportunities.**
We spot opportunities at the intersection of sport and broader humanitarian challenges like mental health, climate resilience and protection.
- 2. Engage and align stakeholders.**
We then co-create with diverse partners including refugee-led groups, local NGOs, academics, the private sector and beyond, to ensure solutions are grounded and credible.
- 3. Generate and apply evidence.**
We will pilot and prototype ideas with potential and, critically, document evidence and learning as we go, using data to refine and further scale the work.

2. SUSTAIN



ENSURING PROVEN INITIATIVES ARE EMBEDDED, REFINED AND CONSISTENTLY HIGH-PERFORMING.

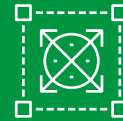
The Sustain pillar, ensures continuity, progress and ongoing excellence, building efficient, replicable and (if possible in the context) locally sustainable initiatives with momentum and vigour. We ensure the longer-term viability of key flagship programmes through a portfolio of structured, efficient and self-sustaining initiatives, generating visibility and evidence, and setting high practice standards.

OUR APPROACH

The ORF will maintain or strengthen established programme models in strategically important contexts. In this way, we will:

- 1. Optimise processes.** Capitalising on strong working relationships, we will streamline processes, maximise efficiency and ensure accountability to affected populations.
- 2. Refine and embed good practice.** We will employ useful, relevant and appropriate monitoring, evaluation and learning processes to understand performance, refine and adapt delivery models, identify and embed good practice and minimise the risk of harm.
- 3. Invest in training and capacity.** We will allocate resources for staff training, mentoring and support to maintain quality and consistency in delivery, as initiatives grow or scale.
- 4. Leverage partnerships for visibility and influence.** We will amplify our initiatives through collaborative storytelling, research and evaluation, increasing the ORF's visibility and credibility, and supporting our global communications and advocacy goals.
- 5. Collaborate across the Olympic Movement.** We will actively coordinate with key stakeholders across the Movement to align efforts across geographies and themes.

3. TRANSFORM



ACHIEVING SYSTEMIC CHANGE, AT SCALE, BY WORKING COLLECTIVELY TO SHIFT SYSTEMS, SHAPE POLICY AND AFFECT PRACTICE AT ALL LEVELS.

Through the Transform pillar, the ORF will contribute to systemic change that embeds contextually responsive and culturally appropriate initiatives in local, national and global systems. By scaling impact with and through partners, we will influence policies, reform systems and leverage our strategic influence. We will take what we've learned in the Catalyse and Sustain pillars, to work with others. And crucially, we will advocate – together with the Olympic Movement, UNHCR, cities, NGOs and researchers – to embed sport into wider responses to crisis and displacement.

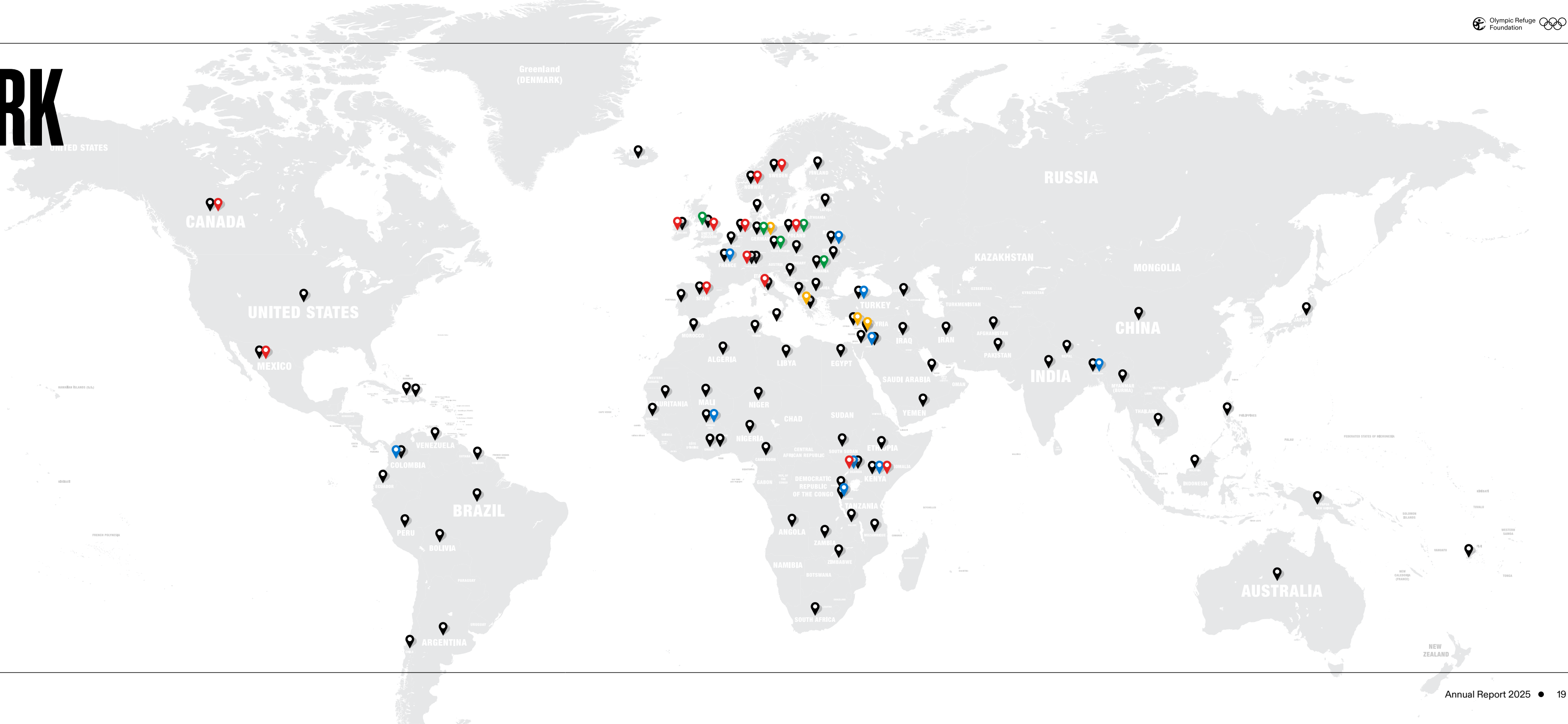
OUR APPROACH

The ORF will work with and through partners to identify and pursue opportunities for transforming and embedding the role sport can play within responses to crisis, including displacement. In practice we will:

- 1. Build alliances.** Actively seeking out, engaging and convening those who are directly impacted by the issues of concern, we will foster inclusive and participatory processes which prioritise the lived experience of communities affected by crisis and elevate their voices.
- 2. Share ownership.** We will work collaboratively to identify decision makers who can drive systemic change – whether at local, national or international level; within the sport, humanitarian or government sectors.
- 3. Collate and disseminate evidence.** We will facilitate the co-creation, consolidation and exchange of knowledge and practices by producing and disseminating accessible evidence-based products and practical recommendations.
- 4. Advocate for systemic change.** Collaborating with key stakeholders, we will lead targeted advocacy efforts that promote and embed safe sport (including sector benchmarks and standards) as a core contributor to holistic crisis responses. We will shift narratives and scale successful approaches nationally, regionally or globally, always adapted to local contexts and realities.

WHERE WE WORK

- COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES
- SPORT COACH+
- REFUGEE ATHLETE HOST NOCS
- COLLABORATIVE ACTION GRANTS
- SPORT FOR REFUGEES COALITION PLEDGE IMPLEMENTATION



HOW WE WORK

To bring this strategy to life, we work across three levels; from the individual, through the community, and up to global systems change.

Through the Refugee Athlete Support programme, we support individuals to train and compete at the highest level. Through our community programmes, we ensure that the benefits of sport are available to a wider audience at local level. And through our engagement with the Sport for Refugees Coalition and the ORF Think Tank, we seek to drive systems-level change, ensuring sport is placed at the service of all those impacted by crisis, beyond the work of the ORF alone.

**“PHYSICALLY, MENTALLY,
YOU ARE NOT WHERE
YOU WERE. YOU HAVE TO
REBUILD EVERYTHING.”**

Young person with experience of displacement

COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES



Credit: UNFPA

KENYA, PLAY2PROTECT

Focus: Raise awareness of gender-based violence and promote psychosocial well-being among adolescent girls, young women and boys.

Partners:



ORF contribution
\$1,480,000



58,757
sports participants



786
coaches trained

BURKINA FASO, RESPECT

Focus: Promote values of peace and protection, and foster psychosocial well-being among young people.

Partner:



ORF contribution
\$1,100,000



12,534
sports participants



111
coaches trained

BANGLADESH, SPIRIT



Focus: Foster inclusion and empowerment of young people experiencing, or at risk of, climate displacement in Khurigram district, Dhaka and Satkhira.

Partner:



ORF contribution
\$1,922,000



15,557
sports participants



235
coaches trained

UGANDA, GAME CONNECT



Focus: Improve psychosocial well-being and mental health resilience.

Partners:



ORF contribution
\$3,836,000



28,397
sports participants



210
coaches trained

TÜRKİYE, SPORT FOR SOLIDARITY

Focus: Raise awareness of gender-based violence and promote psychosocial well-being among adolescent girls, young women and boys.

Partners:



ORF contribution
\$3,983,000



14,562
sports participants



257
coaches trained

BURUNDI, KUKIVI

Focus: Improve the psychosocial well-being and resilience of returnees and host community youth.

Partner:



ORF contribution
\$700,000



13,251
sports participants



80
coaches trained

GERMANY, PLAY, LEAD, BELONG

Focus: Train young women and girls to become sport coaches, with a focus on addressing discrimination and lack of safe spaces.

Partners:



ORF contribution
\$50,000

GREECE, MOVE, ROLL, FLOW

Focus: Inclusive sports sessions to respond to a rise in xenophobia and anti-migrant sentiment in Athens.

Partners:



ORF contribution
\$50,000

CYPRUS, PLAY AGAINST STEREOTYPES AND SMEARS (PASS)

Focus: Work with athletes and young people affected by displacement to become active voices against misinformation and build stronger connections between refugee and local communities.

Partners:



ORF contribution
\$50,000

LEBANON, POWER OF PLAY

Focus: Wheelchair basketball and peace-building initiative aimed at reducing discrimination against children with disabilities in two largely Palestinian refugee camps, Beddawi and Nahr el Bared in Northern Lebanon.

Partners:



ORF contribution
\$50,000

SPORT COACH+

Focus: Equip coaches with knowledge and skills in trauma-informed practice and psychosocial support to create safe and support sporting environments.

Partner:



ORF contribution
\$1,160,000



EST. 85,000
sports participants
(average 49 young people per coach)



1,658
coaches trained





Credit: IOC/Alexander Hassenstein

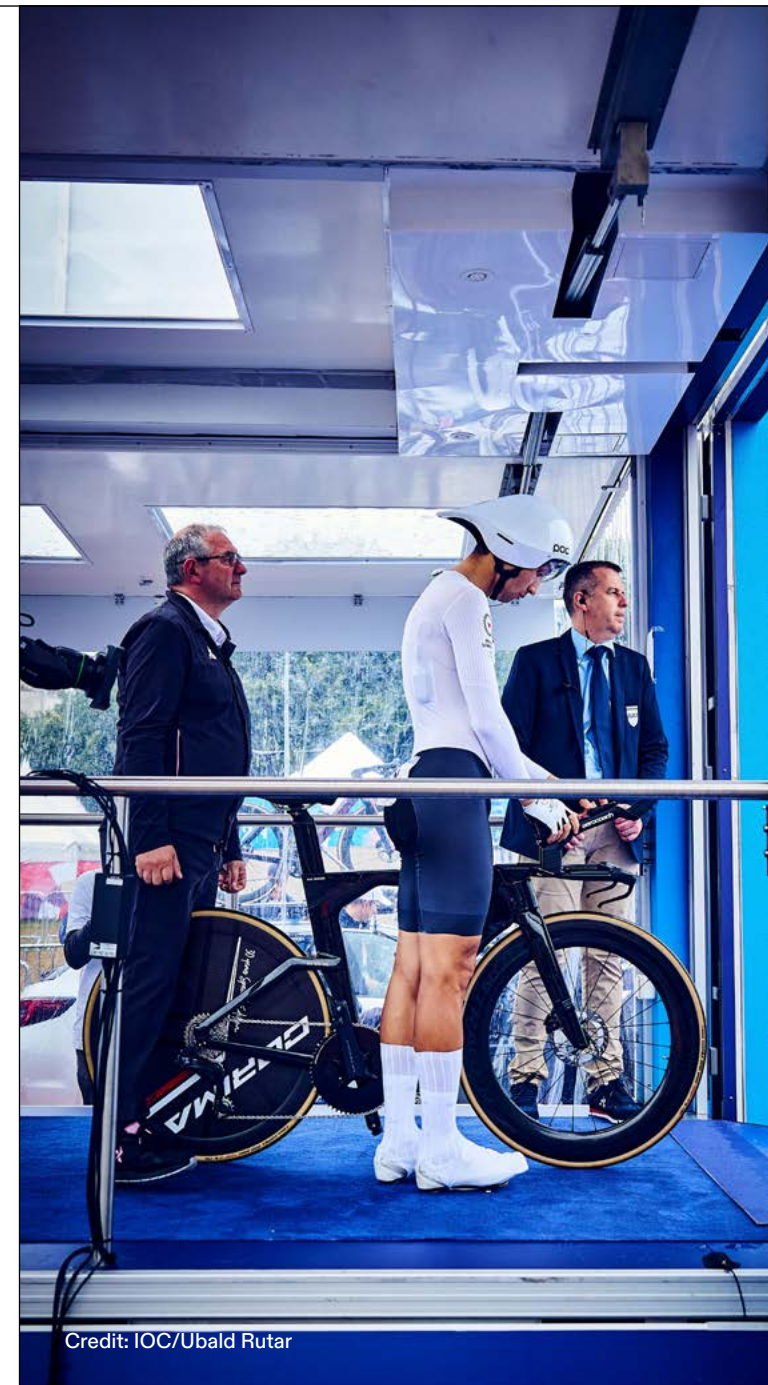
REFUGEE ATHLETE SUPPORT PROGRAMME

Managed by the ORF, the Refugee Athlete Support programme provides Olympic Solidarity scholarships to support athletes to train and compete, with the aim of being selected for the Refugee Olympic Team. To benefit from the programme, athletes must be elite competitors in their respective sport and be refugees in their host country, recognised by UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency.

Through this programme, the ORF creates further opportunities for refugee athletes to thrive. By making Youth Athlete Development Grants available, we are supporting young refugee athletes in their sporting career and preparing for the participation of a Refugee Olympic Team at the Youth Olympic Games Dakar 2026.

Refugee athletes are further supported through Athlete Career Transition grants, which provide funding to access further education and training. For those residing in countries with no track towards achieving citizenship, resettlement is facilitated through education schemes.

In 2025, the ORF announced its support for 47 refugees athletes through Olympic Solidarity scholarships. A further 33 athletes were also added to receive support through Olympic Solidarity's Youth Athlete Development programme, looking ahead to Dakar 2026.



Credit: IOC/Ubald Rutar



Credit: Soccer Without Borders

SPORT FOR REFUGEES COALITION

The Sport for Refugees Coalition was launched in 2019 by the Olympic Refugee Foundation, the IOC and UNHCR. Today, the Coalition has over 170 members which includes governments, refugee-led groups, National Olympic Committees, International Federations, clubs, academia, private sector and civil society organisations. By working together, we want to make a lasting, positive difference for and with people impacted by crises, and the communities who welcome them.

At the end of 2025, the members of the coalition collectively supported 529,000 people affected by displacement through sports programmes in more than 92 countries. Over 11,000 coaches have been trained to deliver safe and inclusive activities, and over 160 sports spaces have been created or refurbished, creating a safe spaces for young people to play and belong.

Sport
for Refugees
Coalition

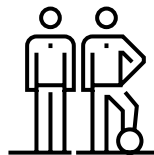
THE COALITION FOCUSES ON:

1. Promoting access to safe sport
2. Providing inclusive, sports and play-based initiatives
3. Supporting the development of skillsets and pathways in sport
4. Producing targeted communication, evidence and advocacy
5. Strengthening multisectoral partnerships and collaboration.



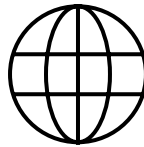
+170

members of the Sport for Refugees Coalition

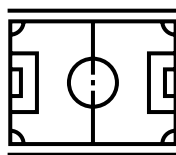


+529,000

people affected by displacement supported to access sport and play based activities since the Global Refugee Forum in 2023



Implementing work across
92 COUNTRIES



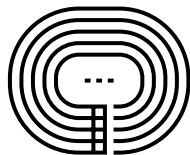
161

sporting spaces created or refurbished



+11,100

people trained to deliver sport-based activities



2,800

sports clubs supported to help extend access to sport

ORF THINK TANK

The ORF Think Tank aims to enhance understanding regarding the role of sport in contexts of displacement. It brings together young people who have experienced displacement, as well as experts from leading academic organisations NGOs and both the private and public sectors.

In 2025, members of the ORF Think Tank supported with various research outputs corresponding to a number of ORF workstreams, particularly Game Connect, Sport Coach+ and SPiRiT. Other Think Tank work included the publishing of “Why Movement Matters”, an animated four-part video series for mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) practitioners and the development and publication of “Cities, Sport and Inclusion: A Policy Plan to Support Displaced Communities.”

In September, the ORF Think Tank convened in Lausanne, the Olympic Capital, before heading to the Swiss Alps to develop the work plan for the coming years, in line with the ORF’s new strategy.



Alastair Ager
Co-Chair

Emeritus Professor of Global Health and Development, Queen Margaret University. Professor, Population and Family Health, Columbia University



Ajwang Warri
Co-Chair

Associate Professor, Faculty of Social Work, University of Calgary



Sabrina Hermosilla

Assistant Professor, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University



Simon Rosenbaum

Professor, Discipline of Psychiatry and Mental Health, School of Clinical Medicine, UNSW Sydney



Insherah Musa

Country Director and MHPSS Specialist, Free to Run



Dan Burrows

Senior Director at Nike, Social Impact for the EMEA region



Anna Farello

Assistant Professor of Sport and Exercise Psychology, Ball State University



Gerald Mballe

Unified with Refugees Coordinator, Special Olympics



Nico Schulenkorf

Professor of Sport Management, Co-Director of the Centre for Sport, Business and Society at University of Technology Sydney



Matthew Lam Joar

Former refugee athlete, Sales Associate, On Running



Jadranka Stikovac Clark

Senior Advisor - External Relations, FIBA



Dick Clomén

Head of Humanitarian Diplomacy, Liaison and Regional Support, International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Europe Region



Jamie Marshall

Research Fellow, Edinburgh Napier University



Maria Bray

Global Advisor on Child Protection and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), Terre des Hommes



Grace Gatera

Youth and Lived Experience Expert, My Mind Our Humanity



Leslie Snider

Founder, Peace in Practice



Davy Vancampfort

Associate Professor, Rehabilitation Sciences Research Group for Adapted Physical Activity and Psychomotor Rehabilitation, KU Leuven



Michael Cacich

Senior Education Specialist, Education Above All



David Karorero

Youth and Lived Experience Advocate



Chinwendu Ukachukwu

Youth and Lived Experience Advocate



Phiona Koyjet

Global Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Advisor



Holly Collison-Randall

Senior Lecturer, Institute for Sport Business, Loughborough University

2025 IN REVIEW

**“SPORT FILTERS
ALL OF OUR
DIFFERENT
EMOTIONS.
IT’S A WAY OF
EXPRESSING
EVERYTHING
THE BODY IS
CARRYING.”**

Young person with experience
of displacement



Credit: Terre des Hommes

1. CATALYSE



In the first year of the ORF's new strategic period, we aimed to innovate new ways of working, learning and supporting our partners. Collaborative Action Grants, launched through the Sport for Refugees Coalition, piloted flexible funding for local and refugee-led organisations. A research partnership with the Geneva Graduate Institute allowed us to examine specific areas of work with greater depth. Jointly, these initiatives have allowed us to surface new ideas and test new approaches, planting the seeds for new concepts and ideas that can address persistent gaps in implementation.

COLLABORATIVE ACTION GRANTS: COMBATTING DISCRIMINATION THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

In May 2025, the ORF launched the Collaborative Action Grants through the Sport for Refugees Coalition (SfRC), the first time a funding window was made exclusively available for SfRC members working in partnership. Grants were open to using sport as a tool for the inclusion of displacement-affected communities in cities, or to combat discrimination, misinformation and hate speech.

The response was significant: over 50 concept notes were received and assessed by the SfRC Co-conveners and

a panel of reviewers with lived experience of displacement. Panellists were selected to reflect geographic and cultural diversity and to bring additional expertise in gender and disability inclusion.

Selected projects are led by community-based or refugee-led organisations which demonstrated meaningful refugee participation in the development of their innovative proposal. Each project was awarded USD 50,000 for a one-year implementation period.

MOVE, ROLL, FLOW ATHENS, GREECE

Organisations: Yoga and Sport with Refugees, Free Movement Skateboarding

Yoga and Sport with Refugees (YSR) and Free Movement Skateboarding (FMS) are collaborating to deliver inclusive sports sessions in the heart of Athens, Greece. In response to a rise in xenophobia and anti-migrant sentiment, this project offers yoga, fitness and skateboarding in public spaces, bringing together refugees and local communities through inclusive sports sessions and community events. The initiative also includes cross-training between YSR and FMS staff as well as the development of a methodology for refugee-led programme delivery.



Credit: Yoga & Sport with Refugees

POWER OF PLAY BEDDAWI & NAHR EL BARED REFUGEE CAMPS, LEBANON

Organisations: Choose Love, PACES Charity, Threads of Peace

PACES Charity and Threads of Peace, supported by Choose Love, are implementing a wheelchair basketball initiative with the aim of reducing discrimination against children with disabilities in two largely Palestinian refugee camps, Beddawi and Nahr el Bared in Northern Lebanon. The project addresses the lack of inclusive and accessible sports opportunities for young people with disabilities and the stigma they face within their communities. Recognising that inclusive activities alone are not enough without stronger family support, the programme engages parents directly, equipping them to design and lead their own peace-building initiatives that foster community acceptance of their children.

PASS: PLAY AGAINST STEREOTYPES AND SMEARS NICOSIA, CYPRUS

Organisations: Generations for Change CY, Athletes for Hope

PASS was designed by Generations for Change Cyprus and Athletes for Hope to counter hate speech and misinformation in Cyprus. The project addresses growing disinformation affecting public attitudes towards refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, which fuels social tension. Through interactive youth co-designed workshops, sports tournaments and media outputs, PASS works with athletes and displaced young people to amplify their voices against misinformation, while building stronger connections between refugee and local communities.



Credit: Free Movement Skateboarding

PLAY, LEAD, BELONG: THE GIRL POWER YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME HAMBURG AND BERLIN, GERMANY

Organisations: Butterfly by Yusra Mardini, Girl Power

Butterfly by Yusra Mardini (BYM) and Girl Power are collaborating with local partners to train and support licensing for girls and young women from refugee backgrounds to become sports coaches. Through football and mentorship, the programme addresses discrimination and the lack of safe spaces. Girl Power builds on its experience supporting girls and young women to develop their leadership skills, while BYM will collaborate with local football associations, clubs, schools, immigration centres and local authorities to build sustainable football partnerships capable of scaling the initiative in the region.

DEVELOPING UNDERSTANDING WITH THE GENEVA GRADUATE INSTITUTE

May 2025 marked the completion of two Applied Research Projects (ARPs) conducted by master's students from the Geneva Graduate Institute on themes identified by the ORF to deepen our own understanding of important areas of our work. Over the course of eight months, the students were supported by the ORF and the ORF Think Tank alongside their academic advisors.

The first project explored how Sport for Protection and MHPSS programmes operate in displacement-affected contexts across the Middle East and the Horn of Africa. The research suggested that sport-based psychosocial support is most effective when informed by and grounded in local realities, with locally led and gender-responsive approaches

producing the most sustainable benefits. Safe environments, trust and community engagement helped foster emotional recovery and inclusion for young people, while challenges such as security constraints, restrictive social norms and limited funding continue to influence programme reach and long-term impact.

The second project explored media portrayals of the IOC Refugee Olympic Team before, during and after the Paris 2024 Olympics – offering insights to support the ORF's new strategic goal to drive greater awareness and more positive perceptions of individuals and communities affected by crisis. The research identified several dominant narrative frames. Coverage tended to focus on individual stories of resilience

without linking them to wider refugee thematics, and attempts made to situate athletes' experiences within broader displacement dynamics – revealing both the potential and current limits of media narratives. While emotional storytelling can successfully draw the public's attention, it does not always offer opportunities to deepen the public's understanding of displacement.



Credit: Terre des Hommes

2. SUSTAIN



Through our Sustain initiatives, we ensured continuity and stability in 2025 while continuing to push our work forward in new directions. Sport Coach+ finalised its first phase, and work through the ORF Think Tank ensured we captured learnings of its first two years and used them to develop the second phase. Flagship initiatives like Kukivi in Burundi and SPiRiT in Bangladesh continued growth and development through new phases of work. The Refugee Athlete Support programme launched its new quadrennial period and laid the foundations for a Refugee Olympic Team at Dakar 2026, while for the first time linking the ORF’s community work to this elite pathway.

SPORT COACH+: EMPOWERING COACHES TO CREATE SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

In its first phase, (2023-2025) Sport Coach+ was developed in direct response to the displacement crisis resulting from the armed conflict in Ukraine. Now in its fifth year, this crisis continues to intensify, particularly for internally displaced persons (IDPs).

It is estimated that 3.8 million people are internally displaced within Ukraine (Source: International Organisation for Migration), while over 5.7 million refugees are hosted across Europe (Source: UNHCR). The scale of the conflict has contributed to mass displacement and a profound mental health crisis. Studies conducted in 2022 found a 54% prevalence of anxiety in Ukraine, with 26% of the population meeting the criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder.

Through 2025, Sport Coach+ trainers delivered training sessions to coaches in nine different countries – Bulgaria, Czechia, Denmark, Moldova, Poland, Romania, the United Kingdom and Ukraine.

A formative research study supported by members of the ORF Think Tank reinforced the rationale for Sport Coach+ and revealed significant misconceptions among coaches about the impact of overwhelming stress on young people’s behaviour and development.

Before participating in Sport Coach+

50%

of coaches incorrectly believed that, for young people exposed to serious stressors, their brain and bodies are wired for stress in ways that are forever irreversible.

48.8%

of coaches incorrectly believed that young people who experience repeated, prolonged, serious stress become “desensitised” to stress.

58.1%

coaches incorrectly believed that sports coaches do not have to adapt the environment for players’ culture, age or gender.



Credit: MHPSS Hub

Qualitative data further underscore the need for Sport Coach+, noting that training helped coaches see young athletes holistically, focusing on recovery through physical activity, connection, trust and support.

“TRAUMA ISN’T JUST ABOUT THE BODY. IT ALL STARTS IN THE MIND, WHICH IS WHY A COACH NEEDS TO SEE MORE THAN JUST MUSCLES AND JOINTS.”

Coach, Ukraine

The second phase of Sport Coach+, which started in July 2025, includes refreshing programme materials based on the learnings from research and implementation experience to date. This participatory process involves mental health professionals, sports coaches and young people affected by displacement.

In 2026, Sport Coach+ aims to expand beyond the European continent and support an efficacy study to determine effectiveness and inform the approach to scaling.

SUPPORTING YOUNG REFUGEE ATHLETES AHEAD OF DAKAR 2026

The Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games will be Games of firsts. The first Olympic event held on the African continent, and the first time a Refugee Olympic Team will compete at a Youth Olympic Games.

For the ORF, this presents a clear opportunity: to assemble a Refugee Olympic Team drawn predominantly from Africa-based athletes. Africa currently hosts more than 47 million of the more than 120 million displaced people globally, and for years the ORF has been working in Kenya and Uganda, two countries that host a significant proportion of that population.

To identify young talent with potential to represent the Refugee Olympic Team Dakar 2026 Refugee Olympic Team, the ORF partnered with World Athletics and the National Olympic Committees of Uganda and Kenya to run trials in both countries.

From these trials, 19 athletes competing in athletics, taekwondo and judo were selected in Kenya and a further 12 athletes competing in athletics were selected in Uganda. These athletes are receiving support through Olympic Solidarity’s Youth Athlete Development programme.

Uganda hosts almost two million asylum seekers and refugees, mainly from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan. The Uganda trials drew participants from Game Connect – the ORF-funded programme delivered by a Uganda-based consortium – marking the first time the ORF’s community work has been directly linked to elite pathways through its Refugee Athlete Support programme.

Kenya is among the top refugee-hosting countries in Africa, and currently hosts more than 800,000 refugees and asylum seekers. Forty per cent of refugees in Kenya live in Kakuma Refugee Camp – where half of the athletes from the first-ever Refugee Olympic Team at Rio 2016 came from, and where the majority of the Kenya-based athletes selected in the trials now live. ORF Chair and IOC Honorary President Thomas Bach has previously referred to Kakuma as “the cradle of the Refugee Olympic Team”.



Credit: IOC/Greg Presto

KUKIVI: PROTECTING RETURNEES IN BURUNDI

Kukivi supports the psychosocial well-being and life skills development of young people in Burundi's Cibitoke and Ruyigi provinces. This programme, implemented by Right to Play, marks a significant milestone for the ORF owing to its focus on the reintegration of young people returning to their country of origin following a period of displacement.

Burundi's recent past has been marked by recurring civil conflicts and violence, leading to widespread displacement and significant constraints on economic growth and social development. By 2025, around 272,000 Burundians had voluntarily returned, mainly from neighbouring countries: Tanzania, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the

Congo and Kenya (Source: Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement). This large-scale return has intensified competition over land and limited economic opportunities, which in turn has heightened tensions between returnees and host communities (Source: Mixed Migration Centre).

Kukivi leverages sport as a tool to develop essential life skills and enhance the quality of psychosocial support to young people. The programme engages coaches, peer leaders, parents, caregivers and other community members to foster a supportive environment for both returning refugees and young people from the local community. In addition, Kukivi is actively working to strengthen government support for the use of sport as a means to improve psychosocial well-being among young people in the targeted communities.

“WE ORGANISE OUR OWN CLUB EVENTS NOW. GAMES, DISCUSSIONS, EVERYTHING. WE EVEN TALK ABOUT THINGS LIKE EMOTIONS AND STRESS. THE COACH IS THERE, BUT WE MANAGE IT OURSELVES.”

Girl, age 17, Kinyinya

Kukivi builds on Uganda's ORF-supported Game Connect programme, with Right to Play teams in both countries sharing

formal and informal learning. Due to different social and cultural contexts in Burundi, Kukivi has applied an adaptive approach with rapid feedback loops for ongoing improvement throughout the programme cycle. A June 2025 observational study reported:

- young people, especially girls, are increasingly participating in club activities; initial hesitation around female participation is gradually shifting.
- perceived improvements in children's relationship building, respect for differences and empathy and early signs of improved social interaction.
- all-female clubs demonstrated effective adaptation of psychosocial support content to meet girls' specific well-being needs.
- strong desire among coaches for ongoing training, particularly managing group dynamics and addressing sensitive topics like emotional well-being.
- local leaders and community members expressed growing ownership of the project.

The revised programme delivery model is now active and will be evaluated in mid-2026.



Credit: Terre des Hommes

SPIRiT: SPORT AS A TOOL FOR CLIMATE ADAPTATION

Building on the achievements of its successful first phase (2022-2025), SPiRiT was extended in July 2025 for 48 months.

The second phase of SPiRiT is co-funded by the ORF and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) as part of the broader Climate Action at Local Level (CALL) programme, involving nine Swiss NGOs. Implementation takes place across three districts in Bangladesh: Dhaka, Kurigram and Satkhira.

Bangladesh’s geographical context makes it highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. It is estimated that nearly five million individuals are currently displaced due to flooding, cyclones, river erosion and other hazards, predominantly in rural regions, with many living in protracted displacement (Source: International Organisation for Migration).

SPiRiT leverages sport to support climate-vulnerable youth, enhancing their physical, mental and psychosocial well-being through access to safe, structured sport and traditional games. In parallel, the initiative develops knowledge, skills and leadership related to climate change and migration. Through local and national advocacy, and by supporting young people to engage in their own community-based youth-led initiatives, SPiRiT is positioning sport as a valuable tool for climate adaptation and resilience building.



Credit: Terre des Hommes

61%

report improved knowledge and preparedness on issues related to migration, displacement and climate-induced vulnerabilities. Up from 8% at baseline.

64%

report improved inclusion and empowerment to engage in climate and displacement replated decision-making processes. Up from 17% at baseline.

54%

report improved psychosocial well-being. Up from 8% at baseline.

REKHA DAS: A JOURNEY OF YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Growing up in Bauniabadh, Dhaka, Rekha Das never had a safe space to play outside. “Whenever we went to the field, people would say bad things. It was not safe for us. I was alone, and when I felt pain, I had no one to share it with [...] During any kind of disaster, I would become anxious.”

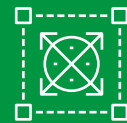
Things began to change when Rekha joined SPiRiT. “I learned how to be confident. While playing, I built relationships and trust with others. I am learning to work as part of a team and to take leadership among my peers.[...]. Through sports, we gained confidence, and now we know how to help others when they need it.”

Rekha learned to manage pressure during crises, and her dedication turned her into a Youth Champion and later a SPiRiT coach. In this role she mobilised her peers to address urgent community problems. “I took responsibility to bring youth together. Their collective efforts made real change.”

One major initiative related to waste management where the group created an action plan and approached political representatives and local leaders. “At first, they said this was an issue for elders, and we should just be careful. But we kept discussing and explained the long-term benefits. Finally, we gained their support and were able to involve the whole community.” Through their collective efforts, the group improved drainage systems to prevent waterlogging. They rebuilt a polluted water source and raised drains in low-lying areas to ensure proper water flow.

Rekha Das’s story shows how sport can build confidence and strengthen social ties and that young people have the power to shape their communities.

3. TRANSFORM



The ORF's Transform pillar commits us to working towards systemic change that embeds sport at local, national and global levels. In order to leverage our strategic influence, 2025 saw the ORF participating at high-level, international fora and contributing to discussions on the role of sport. At the Olympism365 Summit, we launched our Policy Plan for cities and began our work in this space, while our Chair represented the sports world at the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review. Our work alongside the IOC and the International Paralympic Committee to bring Refugee Teams to the Olympic and Paralympic Games was recognised by the North-South Prize of the Council of Europe, and the ORF Think Tank reframed how sport can be used within MHPSS.

CITIES: FIRST RESPONDERS TO THOSE FORCED TO FLEE

Eighty per cent of displaced people today live in urban areas. Young people forced to flee from crisis often arrive in cities with the hope of safety and a chance to rebuild. In 2025, the ORF sought to work closer with cities and municipalities, recognising their potentially transformative role in leveraging sport in support of young people affected by crisis.

When young people fleeing crisis arrive in urban environments, many face barriers to education, healthcare and housing. Too often, sport's potential as a tool for inclusion remains underused. Yet cities are uniquely placed to change this. As first responders to displacement, cities are where young people go to school, access public services, and begin to build a new life.

In July, the ORF published Cities, Sport and Inclusion: A Policy Plan to Support Displaced Communities, launched at the Olympism365 Summit: Sport for a Better World, in Lausanne, Switzerland. The policy plan, developed by the ORF Think Tank, offers practical guidance on how cities can harness sport to strengthen existing settlement and inclusion practices.

To translate commitment into action, the ORF announced a USD 2.25 million contribution to the Global Cities Fund of the Mayor's Migration Council (MMC) at the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review in December.

Through its contribution, the ORF will support between three and five cities with two-year grants of up to USD 500,000 each, to launch city-led sports initiatives aimed at improving health, inclusion and opportunities for migrants, refugees and their host communities. City mayors have been invited to apply, with selected cities due to be announced in the second half of 2026.



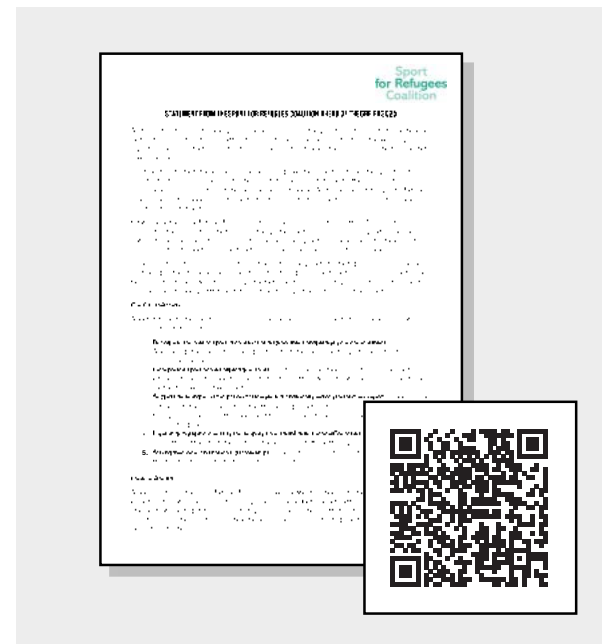
ADVOCATING FOR SPORT: LEADERSHIP AT A GLOBAL LEVEL

As a way of contributing to systemic change and advocating to embed sport into wider responses to crisis and displacement, the ORF was present at high-level fora throughout 2025.

The year ended with IOC Honorary President and Chair of the ORF Board Thomas Bach representing the sports world before the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review, as he had done in 2023 and 2019. In Filippo Grandi's last engagement as UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Hon. Pres. Bach called on the world to honour the High Commissioner's legacy "by ensuring that sport reaches every person forced to flee their home."

Throughout the Global Refugee Forum progress review, the Sport for Refugees Coalition strongly represented with Refugee Olympic Team Chef de Mission Masomah Ali Zada, Gerald Mballe of the Special Olympics, Khalida Popal of Girl Power, Paralympic medallist Zakia Khudadadi, World Athletics and LIV Golf, all calling for sport to become an essential pillar of refugee inclusion.

In the lead-up to the event, the Coalition brought together more than 60 other organisations, and issued a statement calling for greater action to use sport in the protection and inclusion of people who have been forced to flee their homes.



Credit: UNHCR

NORTH-SOUTH PRIZE RECOGNITION FOR REFUGEE OLYMPIC TEAM

The IOC, the ORF and the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) were awarded the 30th North-South Prize of the Council of Europe in October, in recognition of their efforts to enable the participation of refugee athletes in the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The prize was presented by Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Portuguese Republic, in celebration of the role of the Refugee Olympic and Paralympic Teams in challenging stereotypes and raising awareness about the need for greater inclusion, equal rights, and the unifying power of sport rooted in fair play and tolerance.

The IOC was represented by Vice-President Nawal El Moutawakel and Paris 2024 Refugee Olympic medallist Cindy Ngamba. The IPC was represented by its Vice-President, Leila Marques, and Para-taekwondo athlete Zakia Khudadadi who, like Ngamba, made history as the first member of the Refugee Paralympic Team to win a medal.

Upon receiving the award, Cindy spoke of what it had meant to her to compete for the Refugee Olympic Team: “Representing millions of displaced people worldwide has been the honour of a lifetime.”



Credit: North-South Centre

FRAMING SPORT WITHIN MHPSS

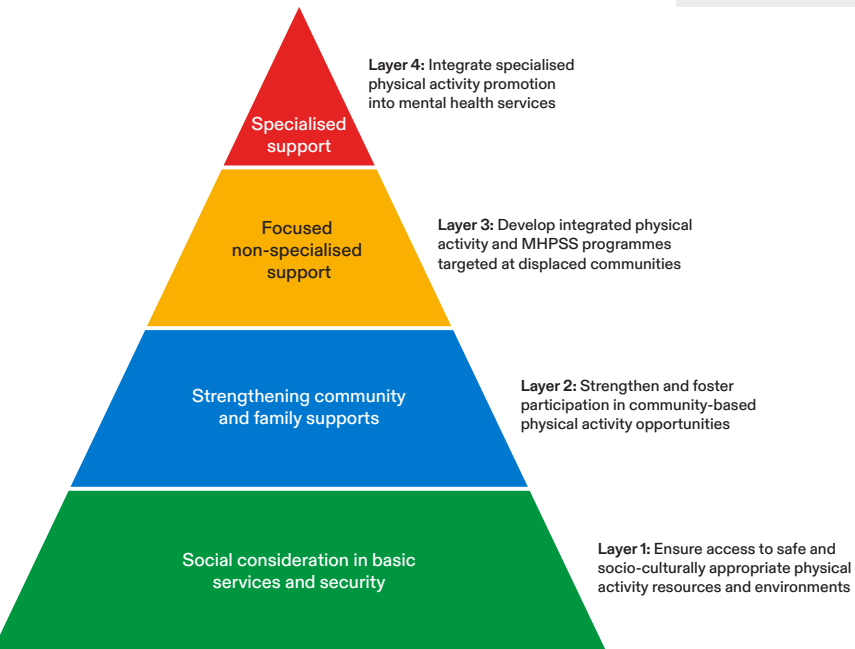
In its function as a thought leader, the ORF Think Tank worked to position the role of sport within the broader conversation about mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS). This work was most clearly exemplified by the publication in the Mental Health and Physical Activity journal, co-authored by Think Tank members and ORF staff.

The article made the case for sport and physical activity’s role as integral parts of MHPSS programming within humanitarian response, and more specifically for people affected by displacement. The authors examined the implementation of sport and physical activity across each layer of the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) MHPSS Pyramid and provided guidance for humanitarian actors on how to integrate this. This will feed our advocacy to the MHPSS sector as a key component

of our work with the MHPSS Hub and Sport Coach+ Phase II, which is being taken forward in partnership with the ORF Think Tank.

A further moment of recognition came with the inclusion of Sport Coach+ within prominent mental health sector publications: “Implementing lifestyle interventions in mental health care: third report of the Lancet Psychiatry Physical Health Commission” and the World Health Organization’s “Guidance on policy and strategic actions for mental health and the culture, arts, and sport sector.”

Sport and physical activity across the MHPSS pyramid



WITH THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS

The ORF thanks the partners that have supported us in 2025, and also acknowledges our passionate and committed donors that have supported the ORF since its creation. As we embark on a new strategic period, we are especially grateful for the support of the Saudi Olympic and Paralympic Committee, allowing us to focus on the years ahead up to 2030.

OPERATIONAL PARTNERS



FOUNDING PARTNER



STRATEGIC PARTNER



FINANCIAL PARTNERS



REFUGEE ATHLETES HOST NOCS



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Olympic Refugee Foundation, Lausanne

Statement of Financial Position as of 31 December (in thousands of US dollars translated into Swiss francs)

Assets	2025	2024	2025	2024
	USD 000	USD 000	CHF 000	CHF 000
Current assets				
Cash and short term investments	5 615	4 105	4 456	3 727
<i>Cash</i>	219	874	174	794
<i>Bank deposits</i>	4'600	-	3'650	-
<i>Marketable securities</i>	796	3'231	632	2'933
Other receivables	120	83	95	75
Total current assets	5 735	4 188	4 551	3 802
Non-current assets				
Marketable securities	4 682	1 269	3 715	1 152
Total non-current assets	4 682	1 269	3 715	1 152
Total assets	10 417	5 457	8 266	4 954
Liabilities	2025	2024	2025	2024
	USD 000	USD 000	CHF 000	CHF 000
Current liabilities				
Accounts payable	921	1 106	731	1 004
Accrued expenses	67	34	54	30
Total current liabilities	988	1 140	785	1 034
Fund balances				
Foundation capital	103	103	100	100
Undesignated funds	9 326	4 214	9 332	5 095
<i>Result brought forward</i>	4 214	8 168	5 095	8 585
<i>Net result for the year</i>	5 112	(3 954)	4 237	(3 490)
Cumulative translation difference	-	-	(1 951)	(1 275)
Total fund balances	9 429	4 317	7 481	3 920
Total liabilities and fund balances	10 417	5 457	8 266	4 954

Olympic Refugee Foundation, Lausanne

Statement of Activities for the financial year ended 31 December (in thousands of US dollars translated into Swiss francs)

	Notes	2025	2024	2025	2024
		USD 000	USD 000	CHF 000	CHF 000
Revenues					
Donations received	1	9 046	2 616	7 498	2 309
Total revenues		9 046	2 616	7 498	2 309
Expenditures					
Contributions	2	(2 859)	(5 506)	(2 370)	(4 860)
Administrative expenses	3	(1 523)	(1 374)	(1 263)	(1 212)
Total expenditures		(4 382)	(6 880)	(3 633)	(6 072)
Financial income / (expenses), net		364	269	302	237
Net increase (decrease) of carrying amount of marketable securities		63	50	52	44
Exchange gains / (losses), net		21	(9)	18	(8)
Excess of (expenditures) / revenues		5 112	(3 954)	4 237	(3 490)

Olympic Refugee Foundation, Lausanne

Notes to the financial statements (in thousand of US Dollars translated into Swiss Francs)

a. Activity

The Olympic Refugee Foundation (ORF) was constituted as a Foundation on 5 December 2017, governed by the provisions of the Swiss Civil Code, with its registered office in Lausanne.

ORF's mission is to initiate sports-related programmes directed at children, young people and vulnerable populations contributing to their protection, health, well-being, gender equality, integration, youth development, education, social inclusion and the promotion of peace; to support the creation or the rehabilitation of accessible and sustainable sports facilities within disadvantaged communities around the world; to support the creation or the rehabilitation of risk-free play spaces and the practice of sport without harassment or abuse.

b. Accounting principles applied in the preparation of the financial statements

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of commercial accounting as set out in the Swiss Code of Obligations (art. 957 to 963b CO).

The fair value of the financial instruments traded in active markets is based on quoted market prices at the balance sheet date. Where not prescribed by law, the significant accounting and valuation principles applied are described below.

Donations received and contributions

The Foundation is financed by third parties. As per the donation deed, donations are irrevocable and may not be reclaimed by the donor for any reason whatsoever. These are recognised in full as revenues (donations received) at the collection date. Donations can be received in form of cash, goods and services (Value in Kind). Expenditures are mainly contributions to the ORF's partners in charge of implementing the projects and are recognised as expenditures (contributions) according to the payment schedule as defined in the contracts.

The excess of expenditures or revenues resulting from the period are carried forward to the next year in the undesignated funds.

Foreign currencies

The ORF's accounting records are maintained in US Dollars. Assets and liabilities denominated in currencies other than US Dollars are recorded based on the exchange rates at the balance sheet date. All exchange differences arising on cash and bank deposits are considered realised.

The statement of activities has been translated in Swiss Francs at average exchange rate for the year (2025: USD/CHF 0.8289, 2024: USD/CHF 0.8827), the fund balances at historical exchange rates and the statement of financial position at the year end exchange rate at 31 December (2025: USD/CHF 0.7934, 2024: USD/CHF 0.9078). Exchange differences arising from such translation have been taken to the accumulated translation difference in the Fund balances.

c. Details, analyses and explanations to the financial statements (in thousand of US Dollars translated into Swiss Francs)

1. Donations received

	2025	2024	2025	2024
	USD 000	USD 000	CHF 000	CHF 000
Donations in cash	9 046	2 616	7 498	2 309
	9 046	2 616	7 498	2 309

Olympic Refugee Foundation, Lausanne

Notes to the financial statements (in thousand of US Dollars translated into Swiss Francs)

2. Contributions to partners

	2025	2024	2025	2024
	USD 000	USD 000	CHF 000	CHF 000
AVSI Foundation, Uganda	786	700	652	618
Terre des Hommes, Bangladesh and Burkina Faso	723	808	600	713
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement MHPSS Hub (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Romania, Ukraine, Poland)	700	1'160	581	1'025
Right To Play, Burundi	400	-	332	-
Ministry of Youth and Sport, Republic of Türkiye	50	813	41	717
Butterfly by Yusra Mardini e.V, Germany, Sport for Refugees Coalition	50	-	41	-
Choose Love, Great Britain, Sport for Refugees Coalition	50	-	41	-
G.F.C. Generation For Change, Cyprus, Sport fo Refugees Coalition	50	-	41	-
Yoga and Sport with Refugees, Greece, Sport for Refugees Coalition	50	-	41	-
"Terrains d'Avenir" Consortium, Paris Ile-de-France region	-	835	-	737
Generation for Peace, Jordan	-	550	-	485
Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants, Republic of Türkiye	-	490	-	433
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Kenya	-	150	-	132
	2 859	5 506	2 370	4 860

3. Administrative expenses

	2025	2024	2025	2024
	USD 000	USD 000	CHF 000	CHF 000
Management fees*	826	915	685	807
Programme development & support costs	275	163	228	144
Advocacy costs	183	95	152	84
Programme impact management costs	112	47	93	42
Non-recoverable VAT	82	81	68	71
Partnership costs	34	50	28	44
Other	11	23	9	20
	1 523	1 374	1 263	1 212

*Management fees consist of operational and administrative services provided by the International Olympic Committee.

4. Number of full-time equivalents

The ORF does not have any employees.



Report by the statutory auditor on the limited statutory examination to the Foundation Board of Olympic Refugee Foundation, Lausanne

As statutory auditor, we have examined the financial statements (statement of financial position, statement of activities and notes – pages 58 to 59) of the Olympic Refugee Foundation for the year ended 31 December 2025.

These financial statements are the responsibility of the Foundation Board. Our responsibility is to perform a limited statutory examination on these financial statements. We can confirm that we meet the licensing and independence requirements as stipulated by Swiss law.

We conducted our examination in accordance with the Swiss Standard on the Limited Statutory Examination. This standard requires that we plan and perform a limited statutory examination to identify material misstatements in the financial statements. A limited statutory examination consists primarily of inquiries of foundation personnel and analytical procedures as well as detailed tests of foundation documents as considered necessary in the circumstances. However, the testing of operational processes and the internal control system, as well as inquiries and further testing procedures to detect fraud or other legal violations, are not within the scope of this examination.

Based on our limited statutory examination, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the financial statements do not comply with Swiss law, the foundation's deed and the internal regulations.

PricewaterhouseCoopers SA

Guillaume Nayet

Arthur Jourdan

Licensed audit expert

Auditor in charge

Lausanne, 20 April 2026

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Credit: FAK/Steve Kiza



Olympic Refugee
Foundation

