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CHILDREN'S
FOOTBALL ALLIANCE



GLOBAL PEACE GAMES
SEPTEMBER 2023

Author: CFA



GLOBAL PEACE GAMES

Children's Football Alliance Global Peace Games Evaluation.

SEPTEMBER 2023



GLOBAL PEACE GAMES, 2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

September 30, 2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: The Executive Summary presents an overview of the main findings from our transnational analysis of surveys with project participants and project partners / team members involved in the CFA's project September 2023. The Evaluation has been designed and implemented by The Children's Football Alliance (CFA).

Project Background and Description

Inspired by The United Nations' International Day of Peace and The First World War's 1914 Christmas Truces. The CFA's Global Peace Games (GPGs) began 2014. The 2023 GPGs was part funded by Star Lizard Integrity Services and mainly money raised from This Country All Stars Charity Football match against Cirencester Town Veterans, June 2023. Directed by The Children's Football Alliance (UK) and facilitated by The Peace Village (Belgium) the GPGs is a week-long peace education through play event engaging young people from diverse backgrounds and different cultures, in football / sports games and non-formal peace education.

Achieved Aims

Project partners from Belgium and Northern Ireland, brought 47 participants (representing 21 different countries) to the GPGs. They participated, FREE, at the peace education event of all-inclusive activities, games and excursions. Through a diverse programme, participants learnt about: The First World War, the role of sport in conflict resolution, cultural awareness, civic awareness, citizenship, tolerance, mindfulness, and humanitarianism. They became competent in sportsmanship and enhanced communication skills, and intercultural awareness.

Outcomes Achieved

The outcomes achieved are as follows:

- Competent in self-learning. Taking ownership to commemorate, celebrate and protect peace, in all societies.
- Improved interpersonal, intercultural, and social skills and a heightened civic awareness.
- Ability to express ideas through inter-cultural communication and build community cohesion.
- Increased understanding of the value of tolerance and humanitarianism.
- Increased confidence in team building and leadership whilst collaborating with different cultures.

Impact

The outcomes achieved are as follows:

Participants dissemination; ongoing influence: sharing experiences, at home, at school and in their community • Health and well-being; activities providing strong mental health benefits. • Multi-agency benefits: sharing best practice and identifying areas for further development. • Stronger GPGs and International Peace Field Project networks. • Delivery partners benefiting on experience – through multi-cultural identity. Project partners identify social return on investment.

Conclusion

Participants volunteered to take part; once again The GPGs was over-subscribed and unfortunately there were not enough places to meet demand. The GPGs continues to reach-out to young people and aid their development through cross curricular activities. It is clear in the Sept 2023 GPGs report that social inclusion is truly the major social return on investment. The report maintains the energy, passion and focus from all involved, to create more Peace Makers for the Future, in a time where global misanthropy is growing.

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Introduction

Children's Football Alliance (CFA) is a coalition of agencies and organisations that safeguard and advance the rights of children in all forms of football. As a humanistic voice and advocate for children, the CFA also acts as a focal point and network for those individuals and organisations seeking sustainable partnerships, information, formal and non-formal education and/or training on child-centred approaches and children's rights in football. As the CFA's network continues to grow, the demand for the Global Peace Games (peace education through football for fun) remains popular. Ultimately, The CFA's mission to 'Protect Childhood Through Play' is the core value of all its projects.

In more than 40 countries there are traditions of Global Peace Games (GPGs) a United Nations' initiative to raise the profile of peace through sport. The CFA's GPGs are inspired by the Christmas Truces of 1914 and how those symbolic moments of First World War history relate to the contemporary mission of The CFA and our main project partner, The Peace Village, Messines, Belgium. Fellow project partners GroepIntro, Brussels, Belgium share this vision for cultural learning through play. The September 2023 GPGs were mainly funded by public donations. The GPGs continues to provide young people with the opportunity to experience cross-cultural learning through cross-curricular activities. In addition, it provides facilitators with the opportunity to engage young people in a range of subjects using football and games, as a vehicle to positive change. It also provides the opportunity for schools, clubs, and organisations, interested in twinning their playing fields with Flanders Peace Fields and to select ambassadors to represent their school through [The Peace Fields Project](#).

Outcome aims

- Through football, sport and games for fun activities, all participants will have increased their appreciation of the importance of expressing ideas about difficult subjects. They will have increased their ability to articulate and communicate ideas, feelings, and opinions effectively with peers from diverse cultures and different generations.
- All participants will, through guided discovery, explore conflict resolution engaging in interactive workshops, gaining social and civic awareness and an understanding of the importance of sportsmanship, friendship and mindfulness. The further development of social skills and increased confidence in interpersonal skills will enable participants to interact with adults and peers from different cultures.
- All participants will experience a range of sporting activities documented in the First World War: football, cricket, rugby and cycling, they will discover through play – a universal language of peace and gain further communication skills through mixed cultural interactions.
- All participants will understand the value of tolerance, humanitarianism and friendship without prejudice, through group work and sharing social and digital information.
- All participants through learning to learn activities will acquire new-found skills that will prepare them to communicate with people from difference backgrounds in a manner that conveys respect, empathy, knowledge and understanding. In addition, they will become more confident when trying to communicate in foreign languages.

Background / Brief history

In 2012 The CFA worked closely with the Peace Village on developing the Peace Fields Project (PFP), a project promoting peace through twinning designated areas of play at primary schools, secondary schools, higher education, organisations, and sports clubs, with Flanders Peace Field. During the development of the CFA's PFP the UN's GPGs were considered an ideal fit for both projects to work together and further raise the International Day of Peace profile. A diverse representation of young people were introduced to the Christmas Truces, commemorating the First World War, and celebrating peace. In 2014 The CFA approached Kent County Council who then published The CFA's GPGs in their education newsletter and emailed it to head teachers. Consequently, The CFA have been inundated with enquiries that now stem from across the UK, the Island of Ireland, and the rest of Europe. Through the PFP there are now over 68 peace pitches in 6 continents around the world. Each peace pitch bespoke to the respective communities' needs; each peace pitch developing peace makers for the future through play; each peace pitch annually celebrating peace through play on relative dates close to their community. The unifying annual date, International Day of Peace, 21 Sept, is the most popular.

Without prejudice, the CFA provide access for young people to all forms of football for fun. There was a clear indication from previous GPGs participants' feedback that a continuation of engaging young people from diverse backgrounds through a varied programme of learning to learn activities, based on a shared heritage, history, and sport, would increase young people's determination to deliver and organise peace games in their communities. It was also considered that football would not be the sole games activity of the programme. Although inspired by the Christmas Truces football games, the GPGs would embrace rugby, cricket and cycling, are just some of the sports documented at home and abroad throughout WW1.

- Sally Meysman, (Director, Peace Village) said, '**We are proud to partner The Global Peace Games. It is great for young people from different countries. The games are fun, the workshops are engaging, and the excursions are exciting. I have witnessed young people with smiles on their faces and tears of happiness when they attend the GPGs. It is a heart-warming event, essential for cross cultural child development and well-being**'.

The CFA are motivated by The United Nations General Assembly's Resolution 55/282. 111th plenary meeting, 7th September 2001. Determined to address the overlooked pledge to the International Day of Peace by all member states, The CFA embarked on engaging young people to challenge the lack of conviction displayed by adults to implement this act of humanitarianism.

55/282. International Day of Peace.

- 1.the International Day of Peace shall be observed on 21st September each year, with this date to be brought to the attention of all people for the celebration and observance of peace*
- 2. Declares that the International Day of Peace shall henceforth be observed as a day of global ceasefire and non-violence, an invitation to all nations and people to honour a cessation of hostilities for the duration of the Day.*
- 3. Invites all Member States, organizations of the United Nations system, regional and non-governmental organizations, and individuals to commemorate, in an appropriate manner, the International Day of Peace, including through education and public awareness, and to cooperate with the United Nations in the establishment of the Global ceasefire. (See appendix 1)*

'It is long over-due that we trust our young people to take hold of 55/282 and show older people how to implement peace'. Ernie Brennan, CEO, Children's Football Alliance'.

Recruitment

Magherafelt High School, County Londonderry, Northern Ireland. MHS participated in the Heritage Lottery Funded [Football Makes Our Shared History Project](#). Their outstanding performance in FMOSH project delivery enabled them to be selected by The CFA's Trustees to represent their community at the 2023 GPGs. The school's project managers challenged candidates to present an audio-visual explaining why they should be selected to participate at the 2023 GPGs. A short list was presented to The CFA for final selection. The GPGs criteria of mixed gender and mixed ability was applied and actioned. 5 boys and 5 girls. 2 members of staff, 1 male and 1 female.

GroepINTRO, a non-government organisation, Belgium, also worked on the previous 6 GPGs. Due to their expertise of working with migrants and refugees, they continue to add an important element to the multi-cultural aspect of the GPGs. Their recruitment process is divided into various regions across Belgium. GroepINTRO deliver group and individual GPGs presentations to ascertain who is interested to participate. Once again, they were inundated with young people keen to attend. Their remit was to recruit mixed gender and mixed abilities. 7 boys and 3 girls. 3 members of staff, 1 male and 2 females.

Gesub-Vrije Basis School, Belgium, were this year's special guests. The 10- to 12-year-old children were selected through the tried, tested and trusted partnership with Bruges FC's former special needs football coach and facilitator, Mr Phillippe Servais. The GPGs have consulted Mr Servais every year on how to invite special needs children to the event and work together on providing safe mixed ability play areas that include all abilities and ages. The GPGs criteria of mixed gender and mixed ability was once again applied and actioned. 15 boys and 15 girls. 3 members of staff, 1 male and 2 females.

Fund Raising

[This Country All Stars v Cirencester F.C Veterans](#), charity football match, Sunday 2nd June, 2023, raised additional core funds needed to support the delivery of the GPGs. The monies supported workshops, excursions, activities, and facilitators.

Representation

The following countries were represented at the GPGs: Afghanistan, Belgium, Belarus, Chechnya, England, France, Germany, Ghana, Iran, Italy, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Rep of Ireland, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Somalia, Syria, Thailand, Turkey and Ukraine. Some of the young people were special needs children from Belgium.



'WE SHALL OVER COME'.

The children from Gesub Vrije Basis School, Belgium performed We Shall Over Come for the GPGs participants. A standing ovation was the result of a warm welcome.

SEPTEMBER 2022 Global Peace Games

Who was involved?

Country	Participants		Staff
	Female	Male	
Belgium GroepINTRO	3	7	2 Female 1 Male
Northern Ireland Magherafelt High School, Co Londonderry	5	5	1 Female 1 Male
Special Guests Gesub – Vrije Basis School, Oostande	15	15	2 Female 1 Male
	Total: 40		Total: 8
Executive Partners			
The CFA			3 Male
The Peace Village			6 Female
			Total: 9

'All the activities were very enjoyable and interesting experiences. I personally learned a lot about the First World War and it was nice to learn this with young people who also learnt a lot. It was also nice to witness young people making a connection with each other and their environment. This motivated supervisors and the group, which was friendly and welcoming'. Lara Lenaerts, GroepINTRO.



Activities / Games

Cultural Games		
Games	Facilitators	Participants
Ice Breaking	3	28
Cycling	8	20
Football	3	40 Includes Special Guests
Rounders	2	20
Touch Rugby	2	20



'The games were all inclusive and fun. The shared learning on a historical playing area is extraordinary and very effective for children of all ages. Phillippe Servais, Gesub-Vrije, Belgium.

'The participants enjoyed all the games. They all wanted more games which is a good sign. Unfortunately, the GPGs was not long enough time went by so quickly. Participants already asking can they come back next year'. Apty Shabouev, GroepINTRO, Belgium.

'Seeing our pupils connect with this environment and making friends with young people from other countries is a learning curve. The activities work on many levels and all inclusive. A very well designed programme in such a short space of time.' Mr Charles, Teacher, Northern Ireland.



SEPT 2023	Breakfast	Morning	Lunch	afternoon	Dinner	Evening
Monday 18th PEACE SÍOCHÁIN DAY	/	WELCOME Belgium – N Ireland Introduction ID Badges	13.00	Opening Ceremony / Exchange gifts Cultural Games / Ice breaking	18.00	March of the Pheonix
Tuesday 19th Celebration Day	7.30 – 8.30	9.00: - Group A: Cycling / Christmas truces - Group B: Football for Fun 10.30: - Group A: Football for fun - Group B: Cycling / Christmas truces	12.00	INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE Workshop Group 1: 14.00 – 15.00 Group 2: 15.30 – 16.30 Cultural Games Group 2: 14.00 – 15.00 Group 1: 15.30 – 16.30	18.00	Workshop (music) Workshop (What Would They Say)
Wednesday 20th Commermoration Day SPECIAL GUESTS	7.30 – 8.30	Graffiti Art Group 1. 9.30 – 10.30 Group 2. 10.30 – 11.30 Football for Fun Group 2, 9.30 – 10.30 Group 1. 10.30 – 11.30	12.00	Passchendaele Tyne cot (Depart 1pm)	PACK LUNCH	Tour of Ypres 18.00 Ypres Last post 20.00 Depart 20.30
Thursday 21st International Day of Peace	7.30 – 8.30	CLOSING CEREMONY SPECIAL GUESTS UNVIEL PLAQUES FEED BACK	12.00	DEPART 14.00		



All the **Cultural Games** were non formal. All participants were assured at their introduction workshop (weeks before the GPGs commenced) that the games would not be a form of assessment or a competition to win at all costs. All the games are designed to help participants gain confidence and communicate in a multicultural environment. Mixed gender, mixed ability, and mixed nationalities supported each other and worked exceptionally well together. There were no nation verses nation matches. In the spirit of the 1914 Christmas truces, all the games were preceded with an act of sportsmanship, echoing the soldiers that played on the same ground over 100 years ago.

Due to the loosely supervised cultural games, it was evident that young people quickly communicated in a manner that empowered them to organise their teams, structure, and strategies. The games helped them grow as individuals and recognise their environment within a multicultural perspective. Independent learning lent itself to trial and error - leading to group solutions and positive outcomes. The lack of conventionality and conventional rules associated with modern day sports ensured that the participants felt confident enough to make mistakes as part of the process. This aspect has been in previous evident GPGs and remained identical in the 2023 GPGs. Participants' comments in their feedback forms made it clear that there was little to no difficulty in communicating through games

and activities. Conversely, some participants mentioned that more games would have been beneficial in terms of varied learning.

'I enjoyed the down time and playing basketball with my friends'. Adam (Spain)

'It is a strange game football cricket but very enjoyable'. Anas (Syria)

Football; The CFA facilitated the football games with members of GPGs' staff supporting cultural games in some additional gridded areas of play. Participants were asked to be mindful of the historic location of when they played their games. They were asked to remember how football games over 100 years ago brought together some Allied and German soldiers. Participants were asked to place their games in the context of 2023 and consider their identity and whether they could identify with the soldiers over 100 years ago. This aspect was discussed before the activities. Participants viewed WW1 footage and a Christmas truces advert on short on film clips. This helped participants for their acute awareness of their unique environment.

'I am a big football supporter. Playing on the peace pitch is very special.' Serhat (Turkey)

'I like all sports but playing on the peace pitch is different. I made me think about how powerful games are to bring us together. The peace pitch is incredible fantastic place' Mohamed (Somalia)

'It is hard not to think about the people that died here on the peace pitch and the surrounding area. It makes playing football here incredible' Polina (Syria)

'The peace pitch is twinned with my school. It makes being here a special place' Regan (N Ireland)

Football cricket games were facilitated by the CFA. Many of the participants had played a form of cricket that is conventional. Football cricket can also be described a football rounders, depending on the pitch set up. The Afghanistan participants had never played football cricket before which led to some of the Northern Irish and Belgium participants teaching them the rules of a fun game. Some participants needed to convey / articulate and communicate their experience of how the game works best in a mixed ability play area. A lot of fun was on display with increased social skills and increased confidence in interpersonal skills openly shared.



'I have never played football cricket before. I will tell my friends back home they will love it' Mujtaba (Afghanistan)

'I laughed so much it was a lot of fun.' Maram (Syria)

Cycling. This activity is a precursor to the visit of The Last Post, Menin Gate, Ypres. The participants rehearse the laying down of a peace poppy ball at the UEFA monument at the site of Christmas Truces. This experience enables participants to ask questions about how the Christmas truces were recorded. This is a good indicator regarding what they have learnt. The environment lends itself to questioning the legend of the Christmas truces. Some of the questions queried the authenticity of the Christmas

truces story. Many of the participants displayed their emotions for the Christmas truces. There was a sombre and respectful mood shared amongst the group. In the context of the location of The Christmas Truces the cycle journey provided the opportunity to discuss the subject of peacemakers for the future. Questions regarding how adults revert to games in times of war? Why do soldiers stop fighting to shake hands, share gifts and play games on Christmas day?



'I made a lot of friends cycling. Visiting the Christmas truces was a great experience that will never forget' Jamie (N Ireland)

'The story of the Christmas truces is very sad. I can't believe that I was at the place where it happened. It was amazing' Grace (N Ireland)

'Cycling was good. I made a lot friends. The Christmas truces were special. I learnt a lot.' Jessica (N Ireland)

'It is hard to believe that it happened. The Christmas truces is very sad and very amazing. I am glad I was given the opportunity to see the memorials.' Katie (N Ireland)

Activities / Workshops

Workshops			
Organisation	Facilitators	Title	Participants
CFA	3	Identity	20
CFA	1	What Would They Say	20
TRASHBEATZ	1	Music Workshop	20
CFA	1	International Day of Peace	20
Graffiti Crew	2	Graffiti	40
CFA	3	March of the Phoenix	20
CFA	3	Excursions	20

English and Dutch fact sheets on each workshop featured in the GPGs information packs. All workshops comprised of brief introductions that allowed the participants to organise how they learned, to be able to resolve and deal with issues that arose among mixed groups and mixed abilities. Participants took ownership and responsibility for their learning. There were members of staff available for questions and support. Aiding intergenerational relationships. Participants were openly mindful of their connection to their new environment and how they can contextualise thoughts, emotions, and ideas, with their peers and older members of their group.

Identity. On the first day of arrival at the GPGs participants were asked to design their own I-D Badge. They were asked to express themselves in the design their badge. It could be as colourful as they wished. It could be as wordy as they wanted. Their lanyard badge needed to inform other people of their name and anything else that the participant wished to share. Their I-D Badge would at the end of the week be flipped over and the participants would then add their new identity IF they felt their old identity had changed. This had a 100% success rate with all participants adding messages to their I-D Badge at the end of the GPGs.

'All was good. All was great' The best experience, thank you.' Aimran (Spain).

'I will never forget the Global Peace Games. Peace happiness and play for ever.' Mohamed (Somalia).

'I like to play team games. To play on the Peace Pitch was very special. Thank you.' Mujtaba (Afghanistan)

'Beautiful people, beautiful place. I would like to come back to the Peace Pitch.' Maram (Syria).

'Thank you for making me feel so welcome. It fills my heart with love to know the Peace Pitch is here for everyone.' Anas (Syria)

'I wish we could stay longer. I made new friends. Everyone has got along really well and we have all had the best time. I have made the greatest memories.' Regan (N Ireland)

'I thought the experience was amazing, It brought us together with different cultures and I have made new friends. I thought the meals were great and the activities were excellent.' Ryan (N Ireland)

Ice Breaking; sets an important benchmark in terms of FUN. The icebreaker activities are intergenerational, mixed gender and mixed ability games. They are designed to welcome and introduce young participants and staff members of the group. **The Gift** is a homage to the Christmas truces whereby everyone exchanges small gifts by way of introductions.

'The exchanging of gifts sets the scene and was a great way to break the ice.' Mr Charles (N Ireland)



The March of The Phoenix around the grounds of The Peace Village explored the symbols and iconography within the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, the tour helped young people to understand the concept of memorialisation and to understand the causes and legacies of war, historically and in the present day. Young people learnt how different cultures bring different ways to remember their dead. Participants related to the concept of memorialisation and commemoration. Participants improved their knowledge of WW1 and found spaces to contextualise their experiences and make connections with the environment that they will make their home for the next couple of days. The impact was heard at the Peace Village at the end of the local tour. Participants asked questions and requested more information. The newfound friendships bonded during the walking

tour and continued for the rest of the GPGs.

'Amazing history. The numbers of dead are astonishing' Rebekah (N Ireland)

'The First World War is new to me and very interesting. I will be finding out more about the history and the role my country played in it' Aimran (Spain)

The Music Workshop, facilitated by Trash Beatz, helped engage participants on a level where they felt confident to articulate and communicate feelings and ideas because of observing and listening to basic rhythms. Some of the participants found the workshop challenging. They were supported by their friends and quickly overcome any doubts in their own abilities. The impact of the music workshop gave young people confidence to make mistakes, correct them and discover their new talents. All participants realised that music is just like sport, it brings us together.

'I did not know I liked drumming, but I do now' Apty (Chechnya).

'We have loads of fun' Luke (NI)

'I could see everyone having fun. Music is just as important as sport for bringing everyone together' Lara (Belgium)



International Day of Peace workshop and What Would They Say workshop. The CFA facilitated both peace education sessions. They are designed to enable mixed gender mixed ability groups to explore opportunities for considering conflict resolution through group debate, discussion and acting (role play). All the participants pledged to agree that there were no right or wrong answers to the pressing global questions that were presented to them in the International Day of Peace workshop. Participants performed their peace ambassador roles with confidence and a level of insight and showed respect to one another throughout the workshop. Interpersonal, intercultural and social competencies were evident at every level of communication. The staff played an important and unobtrusive role and encouraged dialogue. What Would They Say workshop enables participants to consider history in terms of living history. Participants placed themselves in various

roles and acted parts that they felt appropriate reactions to the futility of war. Both workshops provide a good opportunity to draw in the quieter members of the group and give them the confidence to speak in public. The impact, smiles, enthusiasm in groups, recognition and respect displayed through debate and staging scenes. All participants were mindful of all cultures and gender. They

understood what it means to constructively argue without prejudice and to perform a role in a team in a public space.

‘Very interesting workshops. I learnt how to listen, look and debate issues I never have spoken about before in public’ Kyle (N Ireland)

‘The workshops were really cool. A good way of feeling comfortable in public and being confident to speak about things you only see on TV’ Polina (Belaru)

Graffiti workshop. Continues to be very popular at the GPGs. The link between Art and Sports (play) is recognised by participants as an important contribution to peace education. All participants buddied-up (partnered) with participants from other countries. Participants quickly found ways to express themselves through graffiti art. Facilitated by the Graffiti Crew, Belgium, the art theme was Peace and how it conveys peace through vibrant colours. The aim of the exercise is to increase confidence and share creative ideas amongst a culture of diversity. The ability to communicate in a group situation was a shared impact. Participants displayed confidence, a better understanding on working in teams and a positive critical eye for cohesion. Generally, the feedback for Graffiti workshop is outstanding and the 2023 GPGs Graffiti workshop was no different. Participants and staff expressed their enjoyment for the session in their feedback.

‘Love it. Graffiti workshop was so cool’ Jessica (N Ireland)

‘There was a lot of fun. I enjoyed the opportunity. I have never done Graffiti before’ Shahad (Syria)

‘It was great. I worked with new friends and we produced an amazing art’ Sedeq (Afghanistan)



Graffiti workshop

Visit to Passchendaele Museum and Tyne Cot Cemetery is well considered in the timetable. Participants from previous GPGs, conveyed that the impact of their visit to Passchendaele and Tyne Cot would be better appreciated mid-week of the GPGs. This element in the timetable consolidates learning and inspires the challenges set by the GPGs to motivate participants to form their Peace Field Project Peace Pitches. The participants carry their personal experiences through the Passchendaele and Tyne Cot tours. They make connections with history that provokes further questions. Participants contextualise their experiences with a shared history. Their group discussions on the horrors of war are heart felt. The impact, participants shared learning bonds friendships, forms respect across generations, condones cultural respect and supports further academic knowledge.



Passchendaele

‘Passchendaele is an experience I will never forget’ Josh (N Ireland)

‘The number of deaths in battle is shocking’ Sedeq (Afghanistan)

‘Tyne cot is so peaceful and beautiful’ Rebekah (N Ireland)

Menin Gate. The Last Post provided participants with the opportunity to witness the world-famous commemoration at a level they have never witnessed before. The experience reconfirms shared learning from their commemoration ceremony at the Christmas truces. The 2023 GPGs were represent at The Last Post by Polina (Belarus) and Luke (N Ireland) when they respectfully laid the 2023 GPGs Commemorative Peace Poppy Ball at the Menin Gate. All participants were visually proud and respectful of the event. The impact, a better understanding for traditional commemoration, a newfound respect for are cultures and recognition for the importance of intergenerational relationships.

‘This is an experience I will never forget. I think I might be the first ever boy from Magherafelt to place a commemorative peace poppy ball at The Last Post, Menin Gate’ Luke (N Ireland)

‘I was so nervous in front of hundreds of people. I felt like I was the first ever woman from Belarus to place a commemorative peace ball at The Menin Gate. It was a great honour.’ Polina (Belarus)

‘Tears were in my eyes. I was very proud to see a young man from N Ireland and a young woman from Belarus represent the GPGs at the Menin Gate’ Maram (Syria)



The laying of the Peace Poppy Ball at Menin Gate.

Outcomes Achieved

The role of play (sport) guided the participants into areas of self-learning and self-discovery which many of them had never experienced before. Learning to learn is one of many keys in the Global Peace Games: Participants witnessed a living history. The First World War became tangible for them. Acts of humanitarianism became indomitable. They were given access to connect, empathise and respect, the need to commemorate and to cherish and protect peace at all levels in all societies. Participants represented diversity they respected why there is a need for memorials and they ascertained the need for peace pitches, memorials to peace. They appreciated that there are culturally many ways to commemorate wars. Participants discovered that celebrating peace is a universal right, a reminder, a moment of contemplation which in juxtaposition to commemoration is a vital pledge by all communities. Learning about the realities of war, the different nationalities involved and the everyday stories, proved enlightening and often moving. The participants fully engaged in all sports activities, they gained an appreciation for the importance of creative expression of ideas when organising their games at their level – a level playing field – echoing the humanitarian moment in history at the 1914, Christmas Truces.

- Through the role of playing football, sport and games, participants increased their appreciation of expressing ideas about difficult subjects, which aided their ability to articulate and communicate ideas, feelings, and opinions effectively with their peers from different cultures and different generations. Participants connected with their environment, especially the peace pitch. They recognised the issues facing young people over 100 years ago. They were fascinated with the stories of the Christmas truces and how the act of humanitarianism, brought enemies together. Participants connected their own experiences regarding bullying, community tensions and anti-social behaviour, with how football can provide a space to express themselves and bring people together. Evidence of self-learning is summarised in

their feedback forms *See Appendix 3*. Participants took ownership of commemorating wars at the Christmas truces memorial when they rehearsed their ceremony. They displayed a maturation in their competent performance when they agreed that clapping while laying a peace poppy ball at the UEFA monument was an appropriate way to respect the First World War's dead.

- Improved interpersonal, intercultural and social skills were recorded by the participants when they completed their ID Badges and handed them back to the staff at the end of the project. The workshops brought to the fore an equality in shared learning. Often, after each workshop the staff commented on the number of ongoing conversations between participants regarding their experiences and opinions on the subject matter. Conflict resolution was apparent in the importance of play on the field and in debate, during the workshops. The GPGs provided opportunities to communicate in new languages (spoken, art, play and debate) and to develop a positive attitude towards cultural differences and diversity. No found skills focused on civic awareness. The historic location connected young people with humanitarianism. Music, modern art and peace education, encouraged participants to consider what was going on in their community, village, city, country, Europe and the wider world. Learning outcomes were discussed in moments of reflection and consolidated in a fun final quiz day. The quality of mindfulness displayed by the participants throughout the week-long peace education programme was warm and caring. *See Appendix 3*
- All games were never lost on the participants recognition for their environment. The games encouraged the participants to communicate in a way that was reflective to a period in their lives when they played with friends at school, at home or on their local area of play. The Christmas truces focused the minds of the importance of play. Participant showed their ability to express ideas when they explored their creativity with their new friends. Their graffiti art groups would feature friends from different countries, yet they produce works of peace art highlighting the value of inter-cultural communication. The environment created a community cohesion, the participants felt safe to be expressive in their mother tongue and ultimately confident to be creative. The 2023 GPGs were friendly, affable and fun. *See Appendix 3*
- The value of tolerance, humanitarianism, and friendship without prejudice, was addressed in all activities and workshops at the 2023 GPGs. The outcomes confirm that the 3 key elements were clearly achieved. The participants worked well together in their groups. Issues were resolved with little to no adult intrusion. Gender and cultural differences did not cause friction. In fact, they positively added to the awareness of tolerance. Participants openly discussed how differences work. Not how differences never work. The key to the success of group work was to be constantly mindful of mixed abilities. The lessons learnt at the 2023 GPGs link well with previous GPGs; one of the most effective group activities was at the end of each day. Participants would reflect on the day's learning and galvanise their friendships in a shared space, time and place. Recorded on a short film which can be viewed at: <https://www.childrensfootballalliance.com/football-and-peace/global-peace-games-september-2023/>
- Once again, participants proved that communicating in foreign languages through activities was not a barrier to learning. It increased confidence and their team building skills. Many participants took on leadership roles for the first time. A major factor was integration. Integration of refugees, migrants, special needs, nationalities and from different education

systems. Participants represented a broad spectrum of multi-cultural education; they engaged in their learning without the pressure of formal assessment conditions. This aspect in The GPGs continues to pay dividends which are recorded in fully-up questionnaires months after the event. Team building is key at the GPGs. However, no two teams ever remain the same. This strategy keeps participants alert and keen to mix and constantly make new friends.



Unveiling Peace Field Project Plaques from Czech Republic, India, Japan, New Zealand and Northern Ireland, that are twinned with The Peace Pitch, Mesen, Belgium. 21/09/23

Left to right: Ernie Brennan, Children's Football Alliance, CEO. Aodhan Connolly, Executive Office, Northern Ireland. Hugh Utting, British Embassy, Brussels. Sandy Everard, Mayor of Mesen. Ambassador Kevin Conmy, Embassy of Ireland, Belgium. Melanie Verdu, Derde Schepen. Patrick Florissoone, Secretary, Mesen.

MEDIA

CFA's UK GPGs press release template (see appendix 2) was distributed to local media outlets. Consequently, it achieved its national media, tv and radio, targets through the This Country All Stars v Cirencester Town F.C Veterans charity football match Sunday 2nd June 2023. Interview with Paul Cooper, CFA Director on BBC Radio Gloucester. Children's Football Alliance newsletter August 2023 <https://www.childrensfootballalliance.com/newsletter/> and GPGs information uploaded on the Charity's website: <https://www.childrensfootballalliance.com/football-and-peace/global-peace-games/>, witnessed an upsurge in online traffic. The Peace Village included a press photographer for the closing event: [Global Peace Games in Peace Village Messines spread the message of peace worldwide - KW.be](#). GroepINTRO, did not report published media or broadcasts by the time of this report's publication.

A brief GPGs 2023 film can be seen at: <https://www.childrensfootballalliance.com/football-and-peace/global-peace-games-september-2023/>

Social media; all social media platforms were active with reports from The CFA of an upsurge in traffic on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. An average of 600 hits per week over a period of a month across

all platforms indicated that participants and project partners were active in communicating events at The GPGs.

This Country All Stars Sponsored Walk

The sponsored walk connected fans of the CFA's patrons Charlie and Daisy May Cooper's, Bafta award winning comedy, This Country. The money raised went towards the This Country All Stars v Cirencester Town F.C Veterans charity fund raising game, 2nd July 2023.



CONCLUSION

The aim to inspire peacemakers of the future and lay the foundations for an annual young people's international event, is taking shape through 68 peace pitches across 6 continents.

The GPGs was part funded by The Children's Football Alliance; The GPGs clearly brought a diverse selection of young people together; the GPGs enabled all participants to express themselves through all-inclusive sport and activities. All participants engaged in learning about the First World War and experienced the power of sport. They gained competences in cultural awareness and expression. Once again, a previous GPGs participant returned as a volunteer to support delivery. This aspect is encouraged from all partners and remains key to a successful GPGs.

The 2023 GPGs was dramatically scaled back due to funding. In all 47 participants benefitted from taking part. Once again, the GPGs was oversubscribed. Once again, there was not enough funds to meet demand.

The evidence presented in this report that suggests that diversity through play provides a social impact which makes the GPGs high value in terms of investment. Individuals, young and older, convey a change in attitude when they complete the peace education through play programme. Participants are more enthusiastic for an alternative form of health and well-being. They illustrate a passion for learning, sharing and mindfulness.

The social inclusion factor, documented in the summary of the pupils' feedback forms (see feedback summary appendix 3), demonstrated that all the participants, regardless of gender, religion, non-denomination, shape, size, academic or sporting achievements, came together in Flanders Field for a once in a lifetime experience. The GPGs gave them the confidence to shape their aspirations and their pledge for peace.

As reported in the 2022 September GPGs, learning to learn how to commemorate was a success when participants created a mini memorial service at the visit to the Christmas Truces. This once again proved a valuable exercise at the 2023 September GPGs when participants expressed how powerful the experience was. The connection with commemoration was later consolidated when they

experienced The Last Post, Ypres. The significance of a young female participant from Belarus and a young male participant from Northern Ireland both laying a peace poppy football at the Menin Gate is massive for all at the GPGs. Visits to memorials, museums and attending workshops, enabled participants to feel confident to explore the power of play and consider conflict resolution, intervention and peace-making.

Participant's feedback (through a range of comments) emphasised the need for long-term and sustainable Peace Field Projects (see feedback summary appendix 3). Participants connected with their new friends and Peace Village community. They were reminded that the young people from over a 100 years ago represented the exact same communities which they themselves have come from. They learnt about the universal language of peace through play and gained further communication skills through the emersion of different languages and different forms of languages (play, art and music).

The feel-good factor amongst participants who formed friendships has continued long after the event with some participants reporting that they remain in touch with their new friends.

The GPGs provides a safe environment for young people reflect, consider and attain a myriad of skills, far beyond conventional methods. The participants are assured that there are no right or wrong answers when engaging in the GPGs workshops. They can express themselves without judgements or formal assessments. The GPGs is a project constantly in development; areas of the programme that excelled beyond expectations and some areas of the programme need further development. Areas that excelled were communication and expression, juxtaposing football with graffiti art revealed a peace connectivity on The Peace Pitch far beyond instant recognition. Unexpected areas of success occurred when participants took ownership of organising additional activities in their down time; for example: basketball and table football games. Moreover, valuable feedback from members of staff (see Staff Summary Feedback appendix 5) will help address areas for further development. In addition, the organising partners (see Partners Summary Feedback appendix 4) recognise the importance of preparation and more staff time to engage with one another before the event.

A GPGs pattern is emerging in terms of the realities of sport. Many young people consider football and sport differently when they return to their respective communities. The power of sport is contextualised in a unique location where play is the fundamental start to life-long friendships. The CFA wish to share contemporary values for protecting childhood through play with a wider network. The United Nations' International Day of Peace is a good fit to promote the platform for The Global Peace Games to create – Peace Makers for the Future.

Recommendations:

Information packs: staff packs must highlight the I-D Badge feature and why, it is important in terms of the aims of the GPGs. GPGs staff to guide their respective participants and where possible, the participants parents, guardians and teachers, through their information packs before the event. The importance of providing information packs in the participants mother tongue should be valued and enhanced online. A workshop / Q&A focused on the experiences of refugees and migrants would provide further context on the significance of the GPGs.

United Nations A/RES/55/282

General Assembly Distr.: General

28 September 2001

Fifty-fifth session

Agenda item 33

00 57607

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/55/L.95 and Add.1)*]

55/282. International Day of Peace

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 36/67 of 30 November 1981, by which it declared that the third Tuesday of September, the opening day of the regular sessions of the General Assembly, shall be officially proclaimed and observed as International Day of Peace and shall be devoted to commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace both within and among all nations and peoples,

Recalling also its other relevant resolutions, including resolution 55/14 of

3 November 2000,

Reaffirming the contribution that the observance and celebration of the International Day of Peace makes in strengthening the ideals of peace and alleviating tensions and causes of conflict,

Considering the unique opportunity it offers for a cessation of violence and conflict throughout the world, and the related importance of achieving the broadest possible awareness and observance of the International Day of Peace among the global community,

Desiring to draw attention to the objectives of the International Day of Peace, and therefore to fix a date for its observance each year that is separate from the opening day of the regular sessions of the General Assembly,

1. *Decides* that, with effect from the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, the International Day of Peace shall be observed on 21 September each year, with this date to be brought to the attention of all people for the celebration and observance of peace;
2. *Declares* that the International Day of Peace shall henceforth be observed as a day of global ceasefire and non-violence, an invitation to all nations and people to honour a cessation of hostilities for the duration of the Day
3. *Invites* all Member States, organizations of the United Nations system, regional and non-governmental organizations and individuals to commemorate, in an appropriate manner, the International Day of Peace, including through education and public awareness, and to cooperate with the United Nations in the establishment of the global ceasefire.

111th plenary meeting

7 September 2001



GLOBAL PEACE GAMES

www.childrensfootballalliance.com & www.childrensfootballalliance.com/football-and-peace/

PRESS RELEASE

2023 GLOBAL PEACE GAMES

21 countries were represented at the 2023 GPGs, 18th to 21st September 2023, at the Peace Village, Mesen, Belgium, site of the First World War Christmas Truces.

The event celebrates the United Nations' [INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE](#). The GPGs brought together young people across the world with the aim of creating peacemakers of the future. Schools from Belgium and Northern Ireland participated in the week-long peace education games at [The Peace Village](#).

The Children's Football Alliance (CFA) invited young people aged between 14 to 18 to take part in the event, which commemorates World War One and celebrates peace through play.

The event twins [Peace Fields Project](#), Peace Pitches around the world with The Peace Pitch, Mesen. There are [68 Peace Pitches in 6 continents](#) were twinned with the Flanders Peace Field, where in 1914 German and Allied soldiers stepped out of their trenches and momentarily escaped the horrors of war by playing football.

Pupils visited significant battle sites and took part in international games and forums, debating the role of sport at home, in the community and at war. The event is funded by the Children's Football Alliance.

Ernie Brennan, CEO, CFA said: "This is a once in a lifetime experience for young peacemakers of the future. Playing football games on the world's most poignant field will inspire them to pledge promoting peace in their communities."

For more information about the Global and Peace Games and The Peace Fields Project and how your school or club can twin their playing areas with Flanders Peace Field visit: <http://www.childrensfootballalliance.com/football-and-peace/peace-field-project/>

Notes for editors

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To arrange interviews with CFA Projects Director, Paul Cooper, call + 00 44 (0)7875 283093.

The CFA was established in 2008 to enhance children's development through the medium of play by way of the sharing and dissemination of information and the practical application of the knowledge acquired. The CFA's aim is to protect childhood through play

The CFA's core objective is to promote and spread best practice through practical application and football for fun workshops. Current CFA projects include: [Global Peace Games](#), [Children's Football Week](#), [The International Peace Fields Project](#) and [Football Makes Our Shared History](#).

For further background information on CFA projects, visit:

www.childrensfootballalliance.com/FOOTBALL_PEACE_working_group.html

A Summary of Participants Feedback Forms

20 from 20 participants feedback forms completed.

1	MONDAY 18TH WELCOME DAY	YES / NO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was your impressions of Welcome Day? • Did you like the Opening Ceremony? 	20 / 0
<p>'Yes, I felt very welcomed. Exchanging gifts was fun. The games were extremely fun' The Peace Field Project Plaques are amazing. It was great to see my school's plaque. (Grace, N Ireland)</p> <p>'I was made to feel very welcome. The open ceremony was a lot of fun' (Anas, Syria)</p>		
2	TUESDAY 19th COMMEMORATION DAY	YES / NO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you think of the Christmas Truces? • Did you enjoy the Cricket? • Did you enjoy International Day of Peace Workshop? • Did you enjoy the music workshop • Did you enjoy the What Would They Say workshop 	20 / 0
<p>'The Christmas truces were interesting because it gave us an insight of what WW1 was like' (Jamie, N Ireland)</p> <p>'It was amazing. I learn a lot about many of the armies in the First World War'. (Mujtaba, Afghanistan)</p> <p>'I enjoyed the cultural games – football rounders – I make a lot of friends.'. (Mohamed, Somalia)</p> <p>'International Day of Peace Workshop was good. It gave me the opportunity to speak and tell people about my country and how we live'. (Maram, Syrai)</p> <p>'I did not know I could play drums. I loved it. So funny.'. (Ahmed, Syria)</p> <p>'The What Would They Say workshop was fun. I was surprised that it was good.'. (Grace. NI)</p>		
3	WEDNESDAY 20th PEACE DAY CELEBRATION	YES / NO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you enjoy the Graffiti Workshop? • What did you learn about Passchendaele? • What do you remember most about Ypres? 	20 / 0
<p>'I loved the graffiti and football. Amazing to play on the peace pitch with so much history' (Jessica. NI)</p> <p>'Passchendaele is amazing. So sad. I will never forget it. I speak lots to my new friends from N Ireland. We share much in common' (Polina, Belarus)</p> <p>'I was so nervous to be asked to lay the Peace Poppy Ball at The Last Post, Menin Gate. After the event I felt incredibly proud. I will never forget it. A boy from Magherafelt representing everybody at the Global Peace Games. A great day.' (Luke. NI)</p>		

4. THURSDAY 21st INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE	YES / NO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you learn when playing games? • What will you remember about the GPGs? 	20 / 0
<p>'Playing games on the peace pitch will stay with me for ever. I learnt that sport brings us together regardless of ability, colour, religion and gender' (Adam, Spain)</p> <p>'It brought people together from different cultures and it was fun' (Katie, NI)</p> <p>'I will never forget the Global Peace Games. It changed my opinions on sport. I now know sport is for everyone because we all grew up playing games.' (Aimran, Spain)</p> <p>'I have enjoyed every day and learnt so much and made so many friends.' (Serhat, Turkey)</p> <p>'This trip was such a great experience. I'll never forget it. I learnt that everyone has different backgrounds and no matter what our ability, sport can bring us together.' (Regan, NI)</p>	

PARTICIPANTS ADDITIONAL FEED BACK INFORMATION

20 participants feedback forms completed.

Outstanding / Good / Satisfactory / Not

Please rate (tick) the success of the Project according to the following criteria:				
23 How did you rate the GPG accommodation?	8	12		
24 How did you rate the food?	6	7	7	
25 How did you rate the facilities – toilets, etc?	14	6		
26 How did you rate the CFA organizers?	8	11	1	
27 How did you rate the PEACE VILLAGE staff?	12	5	3	
28 How did you rate the GPGs staff?	8	12		
29 How did you rate the Quality of activities?	4	16		
30 How did you rate the Workshops?	6	13	1	

Appendix 4

A Summary of Partner Feedback Forms

2 from 2 feedback forms completed: PEACE VILLAGE and GROEP INTRO

Outstanding / Good / Satisfactory / Not

Please rate the success of the Project according to the following criteria:				
How did you find the GPGs meetings with the CFA?	1	1		
How would you describe the CFA's management of the GPGs	1	1		
Potential impact on future working projects?	1	1		
Communications with the CFA head office?	1	1		
How did you find the GPGs / PEACE VILLAGE organizers	1	1		
Quality of CFA administrative arrangements prior the GPGs?	1	1		

Appendix 5

A Summary of Staff Feedback Forms

6 from 6 Staff Feedback Forms completed.

Outstanding / Good / Satisfactory / Unsatisf

Please rate (tick) the success of the Project according to the following criteria:				
How did you find the GPG accommodation?	4	2		
How did you find the food?	3	3		
How did you find the facilities – toilets?	3	3		
How did you find the CFA organizers?	4	2		
How did you find the PEACE VILLAGE staff?	3	3		
Quality of activities?	4	2		
How did you find the GPG materials, guidelines and information?	3	3		
Degree of usefulness to school / Peace Field Project?	5	1		
Potential impact on future projects?	4	2		
Quality of usefulness of the GPGs website http://www.childrensfootballalliance.com/football-and-peace/	4	2		
18. Quality of administrative arrangements prior to project?	3	3		

‘I really hope that the GPGs is funded for a very long time. More students should get this opportunity – vibrant mix of languages, nationalities and fun.’ Magherafelt High School, Northern Ireland.

‘The GPGs have been absolutely incredible. What I will remember most is the students from other countries eg, Syria, Belarus, etc. Having these different cultures made if for our children and adults. I saw my students learning with one another and with children who were culturally very different and it was such a lovely thing to see. As for the historical benefits, AMAZING. This is worth so much to Key Stage 3 and 4 curriculums. I have loved every second of the CFA’s passion and enthusiasm.’ Magherafelt High School, N Ireland.

‘This is such a great project. I have loved working with the CFA, Peace Village and all the children. The experience will live with me for ever. Thank you’ GroepINTRO, Belgium.

‘A wonderful experience. Love and peace to everyone. Thank you ’ GroepINTRO, Belgium.

‘We love having the Global Peace Games here. Long may it continue.’ Peace Village, Belgium.

THANK YOU

THIS COUNTRY ALL STARS

STAR LIZARD INTEGRITY SERVICES

CHIRON

PEACE VILLAGE

GROEPINTRO

MESEN COUNCIL

BRUGES FOOTBALL CLUB

MAGHERAFELT HIGH SCHOOL

QUINN'S COACHES

HERMAN & VANDAMME COACHES

LAST POST ASSOCIATION

PASSCHENDAELE MUSEUM

TYNE COT

TRASHBEATZ

GRAFFITI CREW

FAVERSHAM TROPHIES

CARS ST CHRISTOPHE

'ON BEHALF OF ALL THE CHILDREN WE WISH A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO EVERYONE THAT SUPPORTS THE CHILDREN'S FOOTBALL ALLIANCE.' Ernie Brennan. The CFA