



Bidna Capoeira

Strengthening communities through sport, music and play

An Introduction

The name Bidna Capoeira was inspired by the success of the capoeira program at Al-Tanf refugee camp, on the Iraqi-Syrian border. One week after a capoeira workshop there by our sister organisation, CapoeiraArab, families spontaneously gathered to play capoeira by themselves and began chanting “Bidna capoeira” – translated from Arabic as “We want capoeira”. The occasion was filmed and promoted by UNICEF to fund a long term project.

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**Bidna
Capoeira**

Image: Tanf refugee camp, Syria, 2009

I. Overview

Bidna Capoeira is a non-governmental sports and cultural organisation, registered as a not-for-profit company (limited by guarantee) in the United Kingdom. It works with marginalised and vulnerable children, mostly in refugee camps. The easiest way to understand our work is to watch the three minute video at www.bidnacapoeira.org (click on the Al-Tanf link).

Bidna Capoeira grew out of the work of CapoeirArab. Founded in 2007 in Damascus, Syria, by some of the team behind Bidna Capoeira, CapoeirArab has run training projects with refugee Palestinian and Iraqi children in the Al Tanf refugee camp on the Syria/Iraqi border and with many other groups of marginalised children.

The CapoeirArab programmes have been highly successful and are supported by UNICEF, UNHCR, Terres de Hommes and the European Delegation in Syria.

The mission of Bidna Capoeira is to take the same programme to marginalised and refugee communities in other countries. The plan is to run 25 projects in different countries over five years. The total funding requirement is \$4m involving over 17,500 children. Individual projects cost approximately \$125,000 for each six month period with 600 children. (Project lengths range from 6-24 months.)

The countries that Bidna Capoeira will operate in will mainly be in the Middle East, Asia and Africa, including Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, Oman, Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Cameroon, Uganda, Malawi, Mozambique, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

2. Background

Capoeira is an Afro-Brazilian sport and art form that involves acrobatics, music, and ritualised fighting and dance. There is no actual fighting and it is non-violent. It is also a philosophy and an outlook on life, one that is based on respect for others, peacefulness and self-empowerment through discipline and awareness of the self and others. As such, it is a powerful tool for community integration and education.

Worldwide there are some 25 million refugees or displaced persons. Many live in semi-permanent camps or tented communities cut off from basic services. Children growing up in these communities are often traumatised, marginalised and not integrated into their wider communities.

The CapoeirArab programmes in Syria demonstrated that capoeira has a significant impact on the well-being of target groups. Psychosocial benefits can include: community protection, social integration and networking, child protection, tackling sexual and gender-based violence issues (SGBV), de-institutionalisation and promotion of cultural heritage.

To date CapoeirArab has trained:

- 5,000 people
- 2,200 children in Iraqi and Palestinian refugee camps
- 100 female juveniles between the ages of 13 and 17
- 250 male juveniles between the ages of 13 and 17
- 10 new Syrian trainers able to teach beginners

3. The Team

Directors and Management Team



Tarek Alsaleh, Chairman

Entrepreneur, capoeira teacher and founder of two capoeira NGOs including the first capoeira school in Syria. Tarek has a background in sport's science and physiotherapy and speaks German, English, Arabic, Portuguese and Spanish.



Nadia Oulaby, Director, Cultural Mediator

Specialising in social theatre and inter-cultural mediation, Nadia has managed capoeira projects in the girl's reformatory centre in Syria and refugee camps. Nadia has worked in the UK, France, Spain and Syria. Nadia speaks Spanish, English, French and Arabic.



Isaac Heinrich, Director, Programme Development

Isaac has ten years' experience in social and educational work ranging from refugee protection with the UNHCR in Syria to social and educational work in Swedish elementary schools. He is presently engaged as Project Manager for CapoeiraArab and Bidna Capoeira. Isaac has a BA in Peace and Conflict Studies and a BA in Arabic/Middle Eastern Studies.



Ummul Choudhury, Director, Business Development

Ummul has a background in research and journalism, working for the Middle East Economic Digest and then The Economist until January 2010. She has an MA in Near and Middle Eastern Studies and speaks English, Bengali, Urdu/Hindi and Arabic.



Dan Harrison, Director, Communications

Expert in new media and communications strategy, specialising in e-business and online communications. Dan has worked in the private sector for international clients including Elsevier and Sony as well as setting-up his own social enterprises. Dan speaks English, French and Spanish.



Patrizia Giffoni, Director, Child/Woman Protection/Psychosocial Expert

Patrizia is a psychotherapist and has many years of experience with several INGOs – Movimondo, Terre des Hommes, International Rescue Committee, Unicef, Save the Children – in programs addressing child and woman protection in Middle East and North Africa Region. She worked as a technical advisor for emergency and development projects on Psychosocial, Mental Health, Reproductive Health, GBV and Juvenile Justice.

Advisory Board

- Theadora D. Tsovili, Child Protection Specialist and Psychosocial Coordinator, UNICEF
- Sergio Taam, Ambassador of Brazil to Oman
- Maria-Helene Kassardjian, Southern Suburbs Coordinator, UNDP Art Gold

4. Programmes

i. Mission and aims

The mission of Bidna Capoeira is to provide a means for community integration using a rights oriented approach. We will support emergency relief efforts in areas of humanitarian crises, and facilitate rehabilitation and development for disrupted or underserved communities. All of our programmes are tailored to the specific needs of the local context. Bidna Capoeira will particularly focus on vulnerable groups such as women and children. We aim to create sustainable projects in partnership with international and local stakeholders, be completely transparent throughout all levels of our organization, and be a catalyst for change at the personal and social level.

ii. Benefits

- Raising awareness of health issues (risk behaviours such as smoking, unhealthy diet) and the benefits of exercise
- Raising awareness of social inclusion-exclusion in issues such as gender/ethnicity/religion
- Inter-cultural dialogue
- Creating local jobs
- Supporting grassroots organisations
- Raising self-confidence and self-awareness

iii. Project components

- Training sessions can include: music, dance, physical exercise, roda & social roda
- Other activities offered are instrument building workshops (promoting sustainability, team-building, networking), painting, as well as other creative workshops

Training outline

A training session generally lasts 1½ hours, but the target group age and other concerns may require adjustment of the length. The training involves the following elements:

- **Music practice** The students learn capoeira songs in Portuguese (solo and choir)/or create a local equivalent and are given instruction in the different instruments pertaining to capoeira practice
- **Physical training** Capoeira movements and sequences are taught, stretching exercises, and individual or two-on-two play
- **Roda (“game circle”)** The two elements above come together in actual capoeira play in the game circle, one-on-one capoeira play is accompanied by music by all; an important chance to review what has been learned in training and a means of self- and group expression

- **“Social Roda”** Trainers introduce discussion topics in the game circle, providing education on social or health related issues, capoeira history, etc.

- **Dance** Capoeira, in its modern form, includes a number of related Brazilian dance forms such as samba, makulélé (stick dance) and others

- **Further Training** Set up after 3 months to support more future Volunteers

- **Building Instruments Workshop** Construction of musical instruments by participants/beneficiaries

- **Painting Workshop**

- **Recording CD**

- **Festival (Batizado)** The show, performed by beneficiary children and trainers, will highlight all activities of the project (theatre, music, local and Brazilian dance, capoeira, makulélé), and will be promoted by small performances

iv. Measurement and Evaluation

All of our projects will have qualitative and quantitative evaluation methodologies built in. The evaluation procedure is standardised, which allows for generalisation and cross-project comparison.

Bidna Capoeira will be completely transparent with regards to how projects are run and what the measurable impacts of capoeira training are on individuals and communities.

The following empirical data will be gathered in order to measure the progress and outcomes of Bidna Capoeira projects:

- a) Questionnaires will be handed out to participants, representatives of the target group communities, and key contact persons from related institutions and organisations at the beginning, middle and end of projects
- b) Records of attendance and participation will be maintained
- c) We will conduct individual and focus group interviews. Transcripts and recordings will be made of all interviews
- d) Comparative data
- e) Videography
- f) Final report

5. Cost Analysis

The cost of running a Bidna Capoeira programme is \$121,000 for 26 weeks covering 600 children. A sample breakdown is presented in the table below:

Description	Day rate \$	Total \$	Notes
Salaries			
Advanced trainer	120	21,840	7 days a week, 26 weeks
Trainer	70	12,740	7 days a week, 26 weeks
Advanced trainer w/e	120	6,240	2 days a week, 26 weeks
Trainer for weekends	70	3,640	2 days a week, 26 weeks
Psychologist	180	21,160	2 days a week, 6 weeks
Coordinator	70	1,820	1 day a week, 26 weeks
		48,440	
Expenses			
Daily Allowance	20	19,200	Food and accommodation
Telephone		1,300	
		20,500	
Travel			
Vehicle rental		5,200	
Petrol		1,300	
Driver		1,300	
Flights		7,280	
		15,080	
House rental		5,460	
Activity materials			
Instrument building		7,200	
Makulele sticks		160	
Memory games		3,600	
Song books		1,800	
Capoeira DVD		1,200	
Paints		40	
		15,000	
Equipment and services			
Instrument rental		1,000	
Filming		2,000	
Video editing		1,000	
T-shirts		3,600	
Stereo		100	
		7,700	
Programme total expenses			
		112,180	
Administration (8%)		8,974	
Total cost			
		121,154	

6. Supporting Bidna Capoeira

Supporting BidnaCapoeira gives you the opportunity to help raise awareness of the needs of vulnerable youth, support cultural diversity and gain visibility for your organisation through supporting social projects in countries that you already operate in or are looking to expand into.

Your organisation will benefit from access to our database of international media contacts, association with our supporting organisations such as UNWRA and UNICEF and be promoted through our website, print literature, live events and an extensive international PR campaign.

We are also happy to create a personalised capoeira training workshop for you and your friends.

7. UNICEF Screen Shot: Al Tanf Case Study

unite for children

unicef

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In Syria, 'capoeira' helps Palestinian-Iraqi children heal psycho-social wounds

By Magda Qandil



AL-TANF CAMP, Syrian Arab Republic, 2 October 2009 – In al-Tanf, a refugee camp set up in the no-man's-land near the Syrian-Iraqi border, Palestinian children who have fled the conflict in Iraq participate in various activities designed to help them heal their psycho-social wounds.

Palestinian children from Iraq learn 'capoeira' – an Afro-Brazilian art form that combines elements of martial arts, music and dance – at al-Tanf refugee camp in Syria.

"Once we brought interactive theatre, another time clowns, and lately 'capoeira', which turned out to be the most effective activity," says psycho-social consultant Patrizia Giffoni, who has spent the last year and a half working at al-Tanf.

The UNICEF-supported team in the camp also includes Project Coordinator Mohammed Nayef and a group of 20 youth volunteers recruited from the refugee population.

An emotional outlet

Capoeira is a combination of martial arts, music and dance. The capoeira activities at al-Tanf are being delivered by CapoeiraArab, a Syrian association that has trained approximately 2,500 children and young people, many of them from difficult social environments.

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