

OBJECTIVE 03

To support reconciliation, dialogue, closer relationship and trust between the Turkish Cypriot and the Greek Cypriot communities

BASKETBALL LOVE - BRINGING PEACE

PEACEPLAYERS CYPRUS AND BARIŞ OYUNCULARI KIBRIS



Photo Credit: Kerim Belet



THIS ACTION INVOLVED

A story writing workshop on 14 February 2018, in Ledra Palace Hotel, in the Buffer Zone.

Creation and dissemination of a calendar for 2019 to duty bearers, donors and all relevant stakeholders.

Production of one short film and two one-minute versions of the film, based on the friendship of two of the program participants from both communities. Screening of the film to the wider public and dissemination through social media.

Women and Sport event on 2 March 2019 at the Polyproponitrio gym in Nicosia.

ABOUT PEACEPLAYERS CYPRUS AND BARIŞ OYUNCULARI KIBRIS

PeacePlayers-Cyprus (PP-CY) was founded in 2006 and has since had over 3000 participants throughout the island. As a locally led, independently registered charity, it uses basketball to allow 8-to-18 years-old Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot boys and girls to play together, learn together and build positive relationships that overcome generations of mistrust and physical barriers to interaction. The Association was officially registered as Barış Oyuncuları-Kıbrıs in the northern part of the island in November 2017 and while the organisation has two legal entities (one for each community), it operates as one with both Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot local staff, management and board.

STORY OF THE ACTION

The action was developed to improve the visibility and outreach of PeacePlayers-Cyprus to attract more youth and to highlight friendship stories born through the program across the divide. The overall action was used to advocate for active youth participation in social development and to support equal access to sport by utilizing the program's network.

With this action, PP-CY worked with the Rooftop Theatre Group for a story writing workshop. The workshop took place in the bi-communal room of the Ledra Palace Hotel, in the Buffer Zone, on 14 February 2018, with 9 youth participants. Through interactive games and theatre, the Rooftop team led them to express their feelings and thoughts about their PeacePlayers journey, empowering them to write short stories.

The stories were edited and turned into a 2019 calendar, which was widely disseminated to stakeholders, duty bearers, funders and community members. The calendar was used as a tool to promote peace and reconciliation between the communities, by highlighting the positive changes that participants have been experiencing.

In order to create stronger social links, expand the program's network and promote youth's active and equal participation in sport, PP-CY organized an event with the collaboration of twenty organisations entitled "Women and Sport" on the 2 March 2019 at the Polyproponitrio gym in Nicosia.

Photo Credit: Kerim Belet



"The event we organized for the International Women's Day was of great importance because not only do we give the opportunity to young girls and women to try out different sports, but we are also empowering them to feel comfortable as an athlete, to be female role models to younger generations and promote sport for women in Cyprus."

Stephanie Nicolas

The event attracted approximately 250 participants, mostly women and girls from five to fifty years old, trying and enjoying different sports such as volleyball, fencing, gymnastics, badminton, climbing, hockey or basketball.

In order to showcase the friendships built and promote program, a short film named "We are Friends" was produced. The film describes the friendship of a Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot participant, Sophia and Şerife; how they grew closer through the program and how the program changed the idea of the "other" in a positive way.

RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

The overall action has strengthened the visibility and outreach of the program by promoting peace and reconciliation, youth's active involvement and women's involvement in sports. While many face-to-face meetings were held, different means of collaboration were created with the Cyprus Youth Council and the Cyprus Olympic Committee to enhance the capacity and scope of the program towards youth's active participation in society. Strategic partnerships were created with the Nicosia Municipality and the Cyprus Olympic Committee to organize joint actions in the future within the frame of an "active involvement of youth in sport and development".



Photo Credit: Kerim Belet

WHAT'S NEXT?

PeacePlayers Cyprus is still the island's only year-round bi-communal youth and sports organization. The program team will continue to work on enhancing the basketball and reconciliation program in general but also increase the capacity of young people living on the island.

TO FIND MORE ABOUT THE ACTION

PeacePlayersCyprus

www.peaceplayers.org/location/cyprus/



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