

football3 for all – Final Monitoring and Evaluation Report

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Introduction

Emerging as a reaction to the increasing violence taking place throughout Colombia in the 1990s, football3 was originally conceived as the methodology behind the *Fútbol por la Paz* initiative (West & Griesbeck, 2009). Named after its ‘three halves’ – a pre-match discussion, football match, and post-match discussion – the football3 methodology aims to encourage communication, exchange, and conflict resolution (Fox, Hebel, Meijers, & Springborg, 2013). In mixed-gender or mixed background teams, players collectively decide on the rules before the match. Mediators replace the referees and help the players set the rules and, during the match, only intervene when players cannot resolve their disagreements. Following the match, players discuss and evaluate their adherence to the rules and award each other fair play points¹. Flexibility is built into the method, as players and organisers have a considerable say over the different aspects of the match. The points awarded for goals and fair play can vary according to different contexts. And the rules chosen by players can range from simple technical rules (e.g. there is no offside) to more participatory rules (e.g. each goal scored by a team must alternate between a girl and boy) (Fox et al., 2013). The focus on communication, fair-play, and inclusion present in football3 thus allows the method to address numerous areas crucial to sustainable development, including gender equality, social equality, and peaceful co-existence. Indeed, as Chang (2018) notes, social inclusion, the development of life skills, and the transfer of positive values are some of the key desired outcomes for football3 implementers. Today, football3 is likely one of the most used sport for development (SFD) methodologies globally, and streetfootballworld data indicates that 75% of its overall membership, including 80% of its European network members, report using the methodology (European Commission, 2019; streetfootballworld, 2018).

More broadly, football3 can be understood as part of the broader street sport concept present within SFD. Though many different approaches can be understood to fall under the street sport moniker, a few key characteristics unite these varied approaches. In particular, street sports are defined by their more informal nature, the de-emphasis of sporting competition, and a high level of participant engagement and responsibility (Bauer, Schröder, & Minas, 2020; Biester & Rees, 2020; Machado et al., 2019). For instance, Machado et al. note that, in street football, “children take the lead and are responsible for organising and adapting the games according to the constraints present” (p. 181). Ultimately, the nature of street sports is seen as having the potential to promote self-efficacy, communication skills, conflict resolution, creativity and responsibility (Bauer et al., 2020).

As for football3 specifically, some authors have qualitatively researched outcomes related to the methodology in the context of shorter events or festivals (Gannett, Kaufmann, Clark. M., & McGarvey, 2014; Segura Millan Trejo, Norman, & Jaccoud, 2018). Looking at the football3 tournament at the 2010 Football for Hope Festival in South Africa, Gannet et al. (2014) found that football3 generally fostered positive experiences regarding relationship building, values and integration. Similarly, in an ethnographic study of the football3 Festival during the UEFA Euro Cup 2016, Segura

¹In many cases, fair play points and match points are equally weighted. Up to three fair play points are awarded to each team, and teams obtain between one and three points based on goals scored (3 points for having more goals, 2 points for a tie, 1 point for having fewer goals).

Millan Trejo et al. (2018) found that the event and the football3 method helped generate an attitude of cooperation. However, challenges were also identified at these events. These included arguments concerning the football3 rules and that sometimes the desire to win caused tension among participants, both on the pitch and during the awarding of fair play points.

Though some organisations connected to streetfootballworld have obtained formal training or experience on the football3 method, many mediators and implementers are not in a position to receive regular support or training, or receive only a brief introductory training. In the case of South Africa, each delegation could nominate one “youth leader, who would be trained to act as a football3 mediator during the tournament” (Gannett et al., 2014). Recognising the challenges faced by mediators and the limited training they received, Gannett et al. (2014) thus recommended the creation of a formalised football3 training curriculum that could help address issues such as confusion regarding rules and the role of the mediator. In a similar vein, Chang (2018) notes that NGOs face significant amounts of turnover, creating a need for “regularly scheduled trainings and workshops for mediators and coaches” as well as online learning materials.

Over the last few years, streetfootballworld has moved in that direction, creating a football3 handbook (Fox et al., 2013) and a trainer manual (Moustakas & Springborg, 2019). These documents have helped clarify the overall structure of football3 and highlight the critical competences and knowledge needed by those implementing football3. However, the fact remains that the use of football3 extends far beyond the reaches of the streetfootballworld network, and not all users have access to in-person training or support.

Against this background, the football3 for all project seeks to both further formalise and expand the reach of football3 educational materials. Network members have recognised that football3 must be scaled up to a wider array of individuals and organisations, and further embedded within systemic structures at the national and European level in order to be recognised by, and meet the needs of, organisations working in the field. To do so, two complementary solutions have been identified and form the basis of “football3 for all”: the creation of organisational and individual certification pathways and the development of a freely accessible Mobile Course. By combining this Mobile Course and a recognised European-level certification, this project helps not only scale up the football3 methodology to a wider array of individuals, but also scales it up to a higher, systemic level.

The following report focuses foremost on the Mobile Course component of this project. This Mobile Course, which can otherwise be described as a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), was chosen as solution to address challenges within the implementation of football3 and scale up football3 education to a global level. MOOCs are free online courses aimed at unlimited participation and open online access. With the onset of the global Covid-19 pandemic, such online learning forms have further taken off. In particular, the rise of online teaching and learning have changed how higher education institutions, NGOs, and sport clubs deliver education.

Moving forward, this report will provide a comprehensive overview of the evaluation of the football3 Mobile Course. This includes data collected during the piloting phase and

survey data collected regarding participant's perceived skill development. To conclude, the report will also bring this data together to propose recommendations for the improvement and future development of online learning for football3.

Methodology

Design

A mixed method approach was used to test and evaluate the Mobile Course. This approach gave equal weight to both qualitative and quantitative results.

The overall methodology featured two distinct phases. The first part centred on evaluating the experience and satisfaction of Mobile Course users during the piloting/testing phase. Thus, this allowed us to not only get feedback to refine and improve the final version of the course, but also gain in-depth information about the experiences of users and their perceptions of football3. Data collection in this phase was primarily qualitative and included a standardised feedback survey and focus group discussions.

The second part focused on evaluating the development of (perceived) attitudes, skills and confidence amongst course participants. To do so, a pre-post, quantitative survey approach was used.

Together, this mixed method approach allowed us to give greater validity to our findings and provide higher practical utility for individuals working to develop innovative, online forms of sport education (cf. Bryman, 2006, 2012).

Data Collection

Feedback Survey

A standardised feedback survey was provided to each participant upon completion of one of the five units of the Mobile Course, and a final survey was provided to each participant upon completion of their assigned units². Data was collected anonymously, and all participants were informed that their responses may be used for published reports or articles.

Each Unit Feedback Survey featured the same five questions, namely asking participants what they liked, didn't like, would keep, would remove, and would change in a given Unit. In addition, participants were asked to rate each unit on a five-point scale (1=Not good at all, 5=Very good). In the final survey, participants were asked to respond, on a five-point Likert scale, to statements concerning the design, content, and usefulness of the course, as well as their understanding and interest in the overall certification scheme. Space was also provided for open feedback on the design and

² For testing purposes, not all participants completed all five Units.

content of the course. In addition, participants were invited to share their contact information if they wanted to participate in a follow-up focus group discussion.

Between 20 and 58 individuals answered the individual Unit Feedback Surveys, whereby 45 individuals completed the Final Survey.

Focus Group Discussions

To obtain further feedback on users' experiences and impressions of the football3 mobile course, two online focus group discussions were held with nine individuals (five males, four females, from six different countries) who tested the course. These participants were sourced from individuals who expressed their interest in the previous feedback survey. Focus groups were conducted online and co-moderated by the first author and the project manager from streetfootballworld.

The discussion was semi-structured and organised around a limited set of predetermined open-ended questions. Further questions, or probes, then emerged naturally from the discussion. In particular, the main topics of the discussion concentrated on users' experience with football3, their experience with the course, and their confidence delivering football3.

Interviews were recorded and notes were taken concurrently and after the interviews by both interviewers. Verbal consent was obtained to record the interviews, and participants were informed that their comments may be used anonymously in published reports or articles.

Longitudinal (Pre-Post) Surveys

Longitudinal, pre-post surveys were designed to assess the communication skills, conflict resolution skills, and level of tolerance of football3 Mobile Course participants. These particular areas were chosen as they are seen as core skills and values within the delivery of football3 (cf. Moustakas & Springborg, 2019). Each area featured a set of ten statements and participants were asked to respond along a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

These surveys were developed based on existing tools in the field, especially those used by the German Development Agency in its Monitoring and Evaluation work (see Sector Programme Sport for Development, 2021). The questions were adjusted to reflect the unique context of the football3 Mobile Course. In the end, 48 individuals people responded to the pre-survey, and another 36 to the post-survey. Of those, 33 individuals responded to both.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data was imported into Microsoft Excel 2020. For the feedback surveys, descriptive statistics were generated for the ratings of the individual units and for the statements in the final survey. For the pre-post survey, data was reviewed and cleaned to remove duplicates. A new variable was also generated to illustrate the overall average score for the three main areas (communication, conflict resolution, tolerance)

and those averages were then compared for all participants before and after the course.

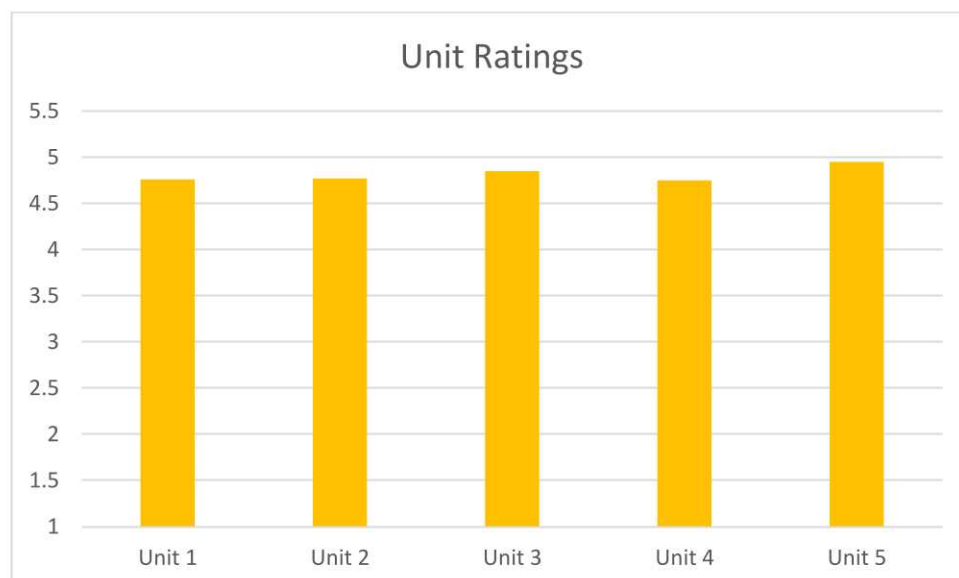
As for qualitative data, a process of thematic analysis was used to inductively generate key themes from the open-ended responses and interview data (see Braun & Clarke, 2006). This process included both authors reviewing the data, establishing initial codes, coding the data and establishing a final list of themes. To ensure validity and obtain further feedback, results were first shared with all project partners of football3 for all.

Results

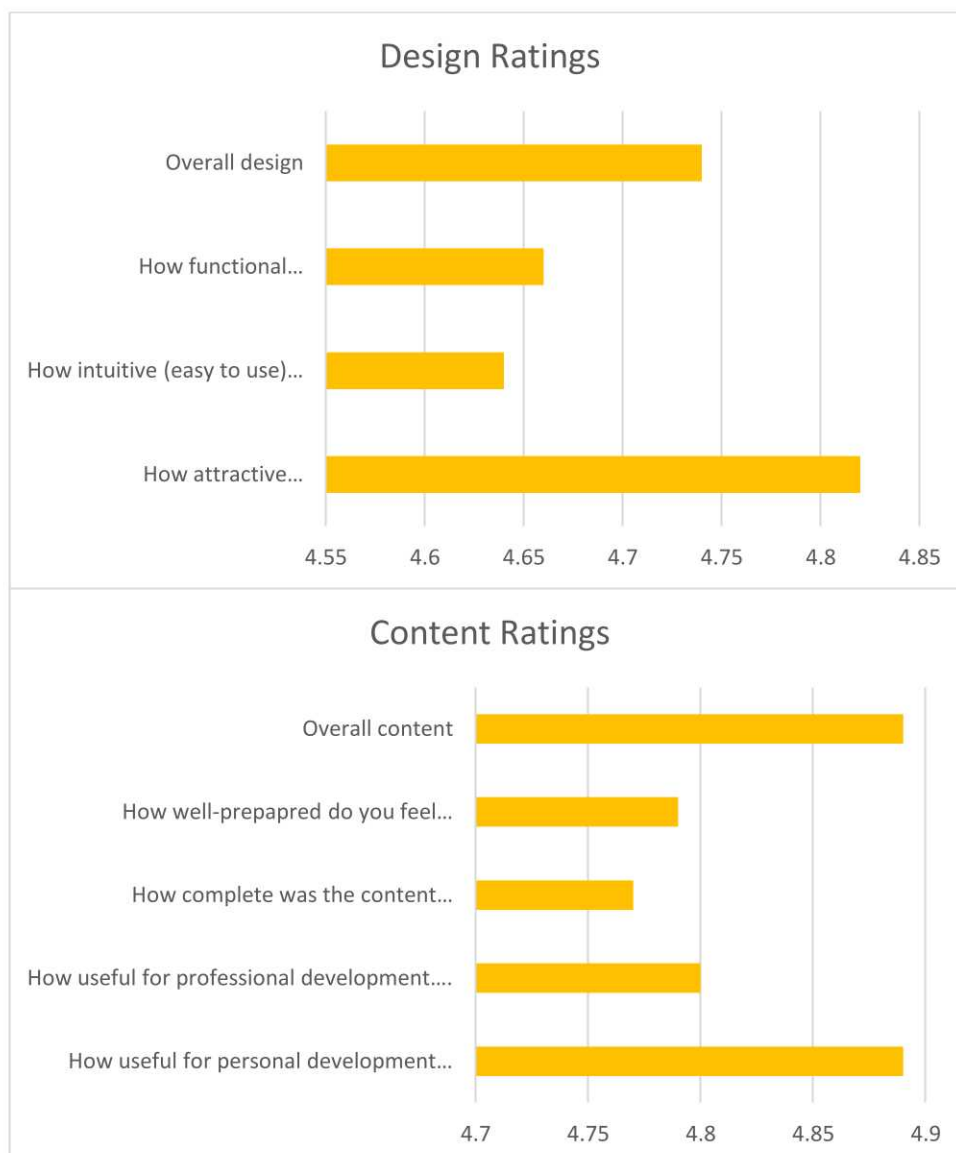
Course Feedback

Course Satisfaction

Across the different feedback surveys, participants reported high satisfaction across the individual units and the overall course. Participants were invited to rank each unit on a scale of 1 to 5, and each unit obtained a score between 4.75 (Unit 4) and 4.95 (Unit 5).



For the course overall, participants were further asked to provide feedback on the total design and content. Again, here, participants rated the course highly in all areas, with scores ranging from 4.64 to 4.89.



Analysis of the open-ended feedback and focus group discussions echo the survey results and reveal that two main themes exist with regards to course satisfaction: satisfaction with the structure of the content and activities, and satisfaction with the design and appearance of the Mobile Course.

Participants enjoyed the course's structure, which focused on a mix of brief sub-units and various interactive activities. This approach was seen as helping participants sustain interest and allowed them to digest the course in small segments: "I really enjoyed it. You can take 10 minutes a day, do some exercises. You can do it whenever, wherever, waiting for the bus. I really like the flexibility and I think that is really important nowadays" (Focus Group Participant 1).

Given that the course is meant for individuals who may not have had contact with football3 before, the simple, "concise" (Survey Respondent) presentation and wording of the was likewise appreciated: "it is also worded in a language that young people can understand" (Survey Respondent). The mix of videos, text, self-reflection

activities, quizzes and external resources was also highlighted as a strong point, with numerous respondents noting their appreciation for the mix of content types.

The participants also saw the Mobile Course as relevant in the context of their broader organisations. Many NGOs lack capacity and resources, and a free, open online course can help bridge some of those gaps: “We lack human resources to guide and mentor our coaches to implement sessions. And here the app could help us to build capacity of our coaches and volunteers” (Focus Group Participant)

Readiness and Transfer to pitch

Despite the high survey scores, especially in terms of feeling well-prepared (4.8/5.0), open-ended feedback suggests that many participants still remained with certain questions or insecurities regarding implementation in the field. One participant described the course as “a starting point” (Focus Group Participant) while another also felt that “this is something you need to practice” (Focus Group Participant).

Part of these responses may simply reflect the difficulty of transferring an inherently practical, interactive, physical and social activity like football3 to an online learning environment. Numerous studies from the broader area of online learning in sport science speak of this challenge (e.g. Iuliano et al., 2021). And, certainly, the project recognised this limitation and concurrently designed, and implemented, a curriculum for in-person training. Nonetheless, participants identified a variety of online content and tools that they felt could better support their overall readiness and ability to execute football3 on the pitch. Broadly speaking, these include tools that can be used on the pitch, examples from different contexts, and the creation of an online learning community. With a view of future development and improvement, we detail this feedback below.

Tools for Transfer

First and foremost, a number of participants highlighted the need for more practical and usable tools to be integrated within the Mobile Course and related app. These tools should be easy to use and directly support delivery of football3 on the pitch.

For instance, many participants expressed a need to have more discussion or observation forms, and to make sure that these forms are easily editable on a smartphone as “editing a PDF on a smartphone is not really comfortable” (Survey participant, Unit 3 Feedback).

Beyond forms, some participants also had somewhat more technically advanced suggestions that they felt could improve their delivery on the pitch. This included an online match or session form creator, an integrated Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) tool “to gather feedback from the mediators/coaches after every practice” (Focus Group Participant)

Context Examples

As all of the partner organizations within this Erasmus+ project are based in Europe, many participants were critical about the Euro-centric nature of the content and

examples. One participant stated, the online course should have “more reference videos and audio from Africa since it feels more of a European course due to the videos shown” (Survey participant, Final Feedback). This point was echoed across numerous responses. For instance, another respondent suggested to “add more examples of football 3 managers operating on different continents (Survey participant, Unit 5 Feedback).

Concretely, this meant that some participants felt that the thematic focus on the content and videos did not reflect their local settings. For instance, many European participants put an emphasis on the social inclusion and fair play. In contrast, one focus group participant observed that there are many potential synergies between football3 and violence prevention in Africa (Focus Group Participant).

Beyond more contextually-relevant examples, many participants also spoke of a desire for more situational examples. In other words, there was a desire for content and examples that directly addressed a wide-range of challenges that occur on or around the pitch. One participant suggested to “add video explaining first-hand challenges coped in planning and implementation phase” (Survey participant, Unit 5 Feedback) while another wanted more content on “mediator feedback after a match” (Survey participant, Unit 2 Feedback). Many participants highlighted similar points, including as it relates to fundraising, participant interaction and engaging parents.

Online Community

Beyond more specific contextual and situational examples, numerous participants highlighted a need for feedback and exchange as a core component of future learning. Adding peer or facilitator feedback within the course was a common suggestion from participants, and the idea of creating some sort of dynamic, interactive learning community was also recurring. Such a community would help address many of the context or situation-specific questions from participants, allow for continuous exchange, and help bring together implementers from disparate geographic locations: “Being in Canada, we oftentimes feel isolated and would like to exchange more” (Focus Group Participant).

Concretely, participants provided a range of suggestions to implement greater exchange and feedback. This included an online discussion “forum on which users and learners can exchange on their football3 experience” (Focus Group Participant), to be able to exchange on in-course quiz or reflection answers with other participants, or to “create a database” with activity suggestions (Survey participant, Unit 3 Feedback).

Longitudinal Survey Results

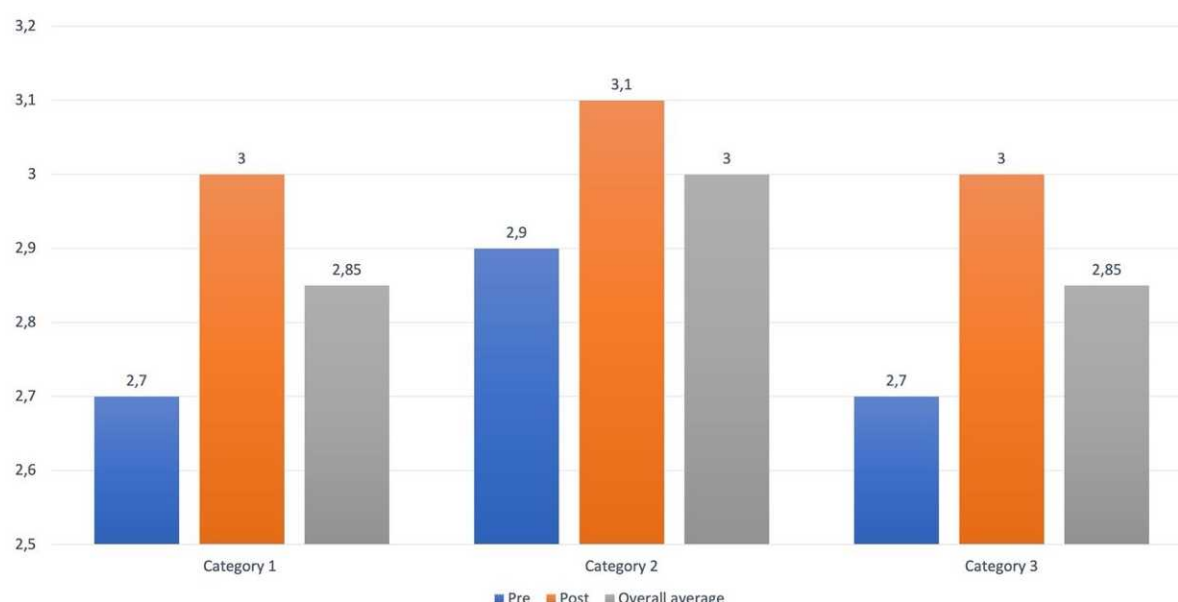
In total, 33 participants took part in both the pre and post online survey. Three main categories were investigated in the longitudinal survey and these items were evaluated based on statements ranked against a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree). The survey aims at measuring some of the skills associated with football3 training and delivery, such as communication or conflict resolution. The first category (questions 1-10) emphasized questions on tolerance and

diversity, the second focused on conflict solving (questions 11-19) while the third category asked about communication and debating (questions 20-29).

The overall average score on the 58 pre and post results was 3 (“neither agree nor disagree”), indicating the level of stability of the responses. There was hardly a difference in the pre and post response behavior for any question.

One main difference became clear in the question “If I like someone or not does not depend on the way he or she speaks and looks”: While the average in the pre-survey was 2 (“disagree”), the post-survey results showed a 4 (“agree”).

The statements “only actions matter; talking about problems never solves anything”, “I am getting into arguments with friends and family members easily” as well as “I am afraid to enter confrontations” all had an average of 2 (“disagree”) in the pre-survey, while showing an average of 3 “neither agree nor disagree” in the post-questionnaire.



Discussion and Recommendations

Overall, the football3 mobile course achieved very high levels of satisfaction, including in terms of structure, content and design. The concise nature of sub-units and the mix of contents and activities allowed participants to feel engaged and be able to complete the course in a flexible manner.

Participants also felt well-prepared to deliver football3 after completing their respective units. This is evidenced by the high average scores reported in the final feedback survey, as well as in the increase in perceived tolerance, communication and conflict resolution skills before and after the course. Certainly, the pre-post survey presents limitations, especially as it relates to the small sample size and lack of control group. Nevertheless, in combination with the survey scores and open-ended responses, the picture is overwhelmingly positive.

Moving forward, however, the participants have also proposed a number of important avenues for improvement. Most importantly, the feedback above documents an important need for more contextually-relevant examples and exchange between geographically disparate football3 practitioners.

Considering the feedback of the participants as well as the potential logistical and financial limitations associated with the further development of football3, we highlight three recommendations for future work or projects.

1. **Develop a suite of mobile and desktop-friendly tools:** Embed mobile friendly PDFs or forms into the Mobile Course and app to support delivery of football3 matches. Forms can include match/session forms, observation forms or self-evaluation forms. If participant consent is obtained, these forms could even be then anonymously collected by streetfootballworld and serve as a basis for future M&E and development.
2. **Development of an online exchange platform:** Though we recognise that moderating an online discussion forum or Facebook group may be time consuming and resource-intensive, there is a clear need for participants to be able to exchange with each other and share experiences from their football3 activities. This is especially true for organisations who may not be as connected to regular football3 activities and festivals. This exchange platform can take numerous forms, including a forum or comment section within the course, a separate Facebook group, or a football3 blog with stories and a comment section.
3. **Integrate context-specific examples:** Filming new videos in different geographic settings may be difficult to coordinate and implement into the course. Nonetheless, given the broad and global reach of football3, there is a need to integrate examples and content from outside of Europe within the course. Written content, pictures, or videos provided by partner organisations could be used.

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