

A large, faded background image of a woman in a black dress, seen from behind, holding a small brown teddy bear high above her head with her right hand. She is in a dance-like pose, with her left hand on her hip. The setting appears to be a bright, minimalist room with a white wall and ceiling.

DFW / DANCERS FOR THE WORLD

„CURE THE PAST, EMBRACE THE PRESENT, BUILT THE FUTURE“

A HUMANITARIAN ACTION FOR TRAUMATIZED AND / OR
UNDERPRIVILEGED CHILDREN, WOMEN AND YOUNG ADULTS
VICTIMS OF CONFLICT

“The two weeks of dance workshops offered by the volunteers of Dancers For the World to our sexually assaulted girls was a magical time for all.”

(Sabine Claudio, Director Caméléon Philippines)



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CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION

In a context where crises in the world are multiplying and taking different forms, the first victims remain populations, especially children, women and young adults who are often marginalized and insufficiently involved in the search for solutions. Yet the latter must be able to play a role as a driving force for conflict resolution and peace building.

The arts, and dance in particular, can initiate new perspectives for the future. While performing arts have value in and for themselves, they can engage with societal challenges such as inequalities, migration, conflict and violence, and create a deeper intercultural understanding. The arts can prepare citizens to think critically, act creatively, and foster civic engagement and social change, while at the same time providing a safe space to express their emotions.

Dancers For the World (DFW) has demonstrated its power in supporting the most vulnerable, empowering children, women and young adults, and creating protected surroundings to exchange in time of crises.

But despite its potential, dance remains poorly exploited. The same occurs with music and singing. If the society often acknowledges their power to support and inspire through discipline and passion, little has been done yet for the role of performing artists as a humanitarian tool to improve livelihoods of refugees and other displaced groups. These activities should be better integrated in the curriculums offered to refugees and internally displaced groups especially in (refugee) camps.

Alongside its core action of support to vulnerable population, DFW aims at changing the image of dance and performing arts as a World of Dream and bring it into the reality at the center of the deepest social issues. Many artists, often suffering of a “uselessness syndrome” at a societal level, would dream to be involved in changing and improving the situation of the most deprived people. Aid actors and artists who share common concerns often do not interact and do not consider the impact they could have if they combined their expertise and worked together. DFW aims to raise awareness, coordinate and bring artists together in a common altruist goal.

DFW in time of the Covid -19

This tragic period has been a revelator of the dramatic need of culture of a big part of the population. The demand for knowledge and skills in the art field is likely to have increased and the resources provided by the culture world have enabled people to learn, practice and sometimes connect with each other. They also have facilitated effective compliance with the rules for containing the virus and improved the living conditions for those affected by the crisis.

If it obliges us to adapt to these times of uncertainty (See Methodology section), we believe it demonstrates more than ever the importance and the assertiveness of the project to support people in situations of vulnerability.



THE ORIGIN OF A PROJECT - Why dance?

“If I always knew the discipline of being a ballet dancer helped me avoid many pitfalls by giving me a focus and a goal, I didn’t experience the extreme strength of it until an overload of emotions made me fall into a dark period. Some artists can leave their roles into the dressing room with the costume, I couldn’t, and the accumulation of work and dramas on and off stage ended up with my resistance. But as Viktor Frankl, the Austrian psychiatrist and neurologist, so well described in his book „Man's search for meaning“, meaning and purpose can save your life. The respect for my profession and for myself in it, the possibility to express through movement what couldn’t be said in words, made me stand up on the day I thought I wouldn’t be able to anymore.

This was the confirmation of my reflexion about the power of dance and art professions as not “only” vectors of dream for the audience but as creators of purpose for people in situation of vulnerability. It was also the real beginning of a project I had been thinking of implementing for a while as a support for people in need as well as a vector of recognition for dancers outside of their pure art form.” Catherine Habasque – Founder of DFW

A dance studio is a perfect example for inclusivity. There is no room for racism, sexism or homophobia. In a dance studio one is judged for one’s ability and not based on a label. Dance allows to express frustrations and emotions when words are not enough or experiences unspeakable. It gives people in situation of vulnerability self-esteem, and a renewed feeling of power over their life and their possibility of choice. It places victims at the heart of their commitment, in a spirit of neutrality, independence and impartiality.

Art creates a safe space for spontaneous expression and dialogues in time of crisis. Above and beyond contrasting traditions and regardless of country and circumstance, access to dance not only helps with physical, mental and emotional well-being, but it can promote tolerance and open mindedness of individual and society.

Together with music and singing, dance has therefore an important role to play, not only for prevention and empowerment of the individuals, women and children in particular, but also in recovery, building resilience and trauma processing. Art allows the expression of emotions without the need of words, brings genders together at a level of equality and, even, like in the Divan orchestra of Daniel Barenboim (<https://westeastern-divan.org/>) or Pierre Dulaine Dancing in Jaffa Project (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=31IBboTu6-s>), makes former enemies experience life and learning together in a surrounding in which creativity is stronger than conflict... isn't this a perfect definition for peace building?

OUR MISSION AND VALUES

„Cure the past, Embrace the present, Build the future“

3 programs in one – 3 target groups:

– We use movement as an educational / therapeutic tool to enable people, young men and women, and children, who have experienced significant trauma in societies or contexts of crisis that usually sees them marginalized , to express the unspeakable through movement and learn how to use their emotions as a guide for effective action. Dance teaches new ways to self-regulate through breath, movement and rhythm. It helps develop creativity, empathy, resilience and ability to react. Dance training provides a safe environment for the victims to explore emotions, learn new ways to process trauma and experience joy and freedom within one's body.



– We support the development of young talents in emerging and/or countries under crisis, who would otherwise not have the access and recourses to professional support. We have a deep desire to help gifted children and young adults realize their dreams, just as we have had the opportunity to realize our own. We organize and support financially individual and / or group dance classes with local teachers to take place after our departure. We follow up the progress of the young artist (s) through regular online meeting with the teacher and enhance its (their) talent through online classes. In societies in which the unemployment of young people is an important issue, we are also aiming to give them a tool for their future and built a financial, intellectual and spiritual independence that will make them active citizens and peace builders of their society.

– We build a talent pool program for professional dancers and performing artists. Professional dancers are, through their profession, emphatic, highly disciplined, mentally strong individuals which can be not only examples for their students but the passers of a knowledge and a life discipline which will become bases for renewed hope and trust in the future. From their side, dancers get, with this program, the unique opportunity to discover and develop their abilities in challenging conditions and share their knowledge off the stage. This experience strengthens their self-confidence as much as their empathy and offers new space for artistic development. We also enable dancers who have left the stage to transfer their experience thus reconnecting with their passion and rich experience within an altruist goal.

GOALS

DFW aims at addressing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and contributing to the global vision and plan for ending poverty and hunger, supporting human rights, and strengthening world peace by 2030. At the heart of the Agenda is a set of goals (SDGs) and targets, among which DFW pays particular attention, like those relevant to youth, gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls, as well as the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies and the creation of safe and resilient cities and human settlements.

In addition, the Global Refugee Compact (GRC), adopted in December 2018 by the UN General Assembly, also calls for the need to facilitate future arrangements for durable solutions. Such solutions are incomplete if they do not consider the arts and humanities as an integral part of education as a way of addressing grievances and physical and/or mental abuses especially of women and children. Many forcefully displaced refugees will also need to find ways to tackle psychosocial trauma. The activities that DFW are proposing will contribute to various goals and objectives of the GRC e.g., fostering respect and understanding, as well as combating gender discrimination. The activities are to use the power and positive impact of civil society and social media.

DFW wants to bring a new voice and innovative ways in a process of continuous search for solutions. We wish to give health, peace building, gender equality and leadership, new keys born from ageless compatible mediums: art, purpose and discipline.

METHODOLOGY

Project Selection, Organization and Monitoring:

DFW focuses on the recovery phase in the emergency preparedness cycle to implement its activities. We concentrate each year on two projects in socially disadvantaged regions, working with worn-torn and/or people who have experienced violence with the goal of helping them to process their trauma.



DFW's very convincing experience with the refugees of the Moria camp on Lesbos (Greece), followed by the Swiss television in 2019, is reproducible to other camps and circumstances. <https://dfw-ch.com/humanitarian/lesbos-refugees-camp-2019/>

We give extreme importance in building all projects in cooperation with local partners who help DFW identify the needs on the ground and prepare the structure and conditions for our actors to deliver the best possible results. Each project is carried out in collaboration with a carefully selected local (aid) organization/NGO. Together with the local organization, DFW evaluates the needs of the group to determine which type of dance or performing art is the most adapted to the situation. (Ballet and Indian to develop elegance and therefore respect for oneself, Flamenco and hip-hop to help people expressing their anger or let out unused energy (In the case of the camps for particularly), Latino dances to allow a respectful contact between girls and boys, contemporary dance and improvisation to open to expression over words).

Around 15 / 20 days educational/ therapeutic program are then held on different dance styles and techniques. Together with the professional dancers, the students put on if possible, a performance at the end of the training period. The intensive classes and the new body feeling, the responsibility of the performance and the pride to show the work are an important part of the trauma processing phase.

DFW attaches great importance to continuing its work with the organizations and participants after the event. Either DFW is re-deployed at the same location or seeks local partners to continue training. We also track progress regularly via Skype.

Methodology - an example: Ballet in the Kibera slum

In August 2019, after the usual process of investigation and contact with the NGO on the field, funding and research of the perfect participating team, DFW spent two weeks working with the children of the Ballet school Marc Wamaya created in the Kibera slum beside Nairobi. <https://dfw-ch.com/humanitarian/ballet-school-in-the-kibera-slum-kenya-august-2019/>. Shy on the first day, the children came more and more numerous. From the third day on, we had to separate them in various classes to be able to work with the around 200 kids coming each day. All of them with no exception whatsoever due to physical limitation or age could participate to the daily Ballet classes.

Out of those 200 children, 30 were chosen to create a choreography imagined for them and with them, talking about their issues and for which they chose the title themselves. During three hours a day, those more advanced or talented children learned deeply about discipline, working together and supporting each other, musicality, rhythm, technique and precision. They are now using the choreography to fundraise their dance classes. All other children were allowed to watch or follow the rehearsals.

From those 30 children we decided to support the young Eugene in his dream of becoming a Ballet Dancer. In September 2019 he started intensive Dance classes in a Ballet school in center Nairobi. DFW supports him financially, we follow his progress and Skype regularly. His life is now out of the slum, his future hopefully a well. If he would later decide not to become a Ballet dancer, he will have learnt that the world is not always that bad and sometimes allows you to pursue your dreams when you fight for them.



DFW in time of the Covid-19

DFW aims to manage future activities in a world where the pandemic may become a recurring phenomenon. To this end, DFW has designed its contingency plan, which is divided into two phases.

A short-term phase consisting of a return to activities in the near future will entail: a monitoring of the pandemic-related measures taken by the host country authorities; and applying norms such as social distancing, washing hands and small gatherings.

The second long-term phase aims at adapting our activities while preparing to cope with the resurgence of the virus or the appearance of a new epidemic. It allows us to go sooner than planned to the enlarged program of DFW and introduce a variety of artistic practices such as music and singing which require less contact and space than dancing. Our dance program will go on with adapted teaching methods and minimized contact which will not interfere with the quality of the transmission of knowledge.

Beside those two phases concerning our work within the possibilities of traveling, DFW has started partnerships with experienced organizations and / or individuals which can take over the work on the field and is creating the bases for the development of a new one in the Kibera Slums.

PARTNERSHIPS

DFW has initiated various outreach activities with organizations and/or individuals pursuing similar objectives for vulnerable people, especially children and women, with a focus on those living in refugee camps.

Partnership and projects are starting with artistic personalities and organisations:

- Fabrice Don De Dieu and its dance company Congo Drama who have demonstrated very convincing results within their collaboration with the UNCHR. We want to find the financial support for the next project of Congo Drama in the camp
<https://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/2018/3/5aa666c14/congo-dance-project-helps-refugees-steps-towards-rebuilding-lives.html> -
- Ashley Lobo, founder and artistic director of Danceworx & Navdhara Indian Dance Theater based in Mumbai (India), whose academy has been supporting vulnerable populations and young talents for more than a decade.
- Kuza Kipaji Dance and Art Center is a new organization created in the poor suburb of Nairobi by artists we met during our work there and whose work we recognized as extremely valuable. We wish to support financially its creation and further development.

Through those partnerships and the coming ones (Mexico is in progress), we are aiming to create bases of DFW on other continents, supporting and trusting the work of local teams and collaborators in life conditions they know and situations they often went through themselves, as well as their research for solutions in surroundings they can control. If important actions will be taken in consultation, the input of local colleagues is an important contribution for relevant and pertinent results, even more in times where scarce possibilities of travelling could slow down the projects.

The very last notable result of DFW's activities is the Scholarship offered by the Ballet School of the Manila Ballet (Philippines) to the young Jhyckie (See below in Results). After the young Eugene in Dance Center Kenya, It's



the second time DFW opens the door for a young talent to develop and grow out of the underprivileged environment he/she was born in. We are aiming to expand our partnerships with high quality institutions to assist when appropriate with the placement of extraordinary talents in ballet schools around the world.

BENEFICIARIES

DFW's activities are primarily aimed at vulnerable people, especially women, young men and children. To this end, DFW works with a wide range of artists to address issues of concern to the most vulnerable. This sometimes involves changing perceptions and breaking down stereotypes that aid workers, artists and people may have on each other.

Main level of beneficiaries:

- Women
- Young men and women
- Children (girls and boys)
- Talented individuals in the different performing arts we are bringing

Second level of beneficiaries:

- Artists
- Aid workers and Local partner organizations

RESULTS

Around 1000 children and adults have taken part in our humanitarian workshops in Georgia, the Philippines, India, Cambodia, Greece and Kenya.

About 1500 persons assisted to the performances organized with the in Georgia, Spain, Cambodia and Kenya and about 1200 to the productions in Basel.

Since 2019, DFW is financing and supporting the Ballet studies of a talented young ballet dancer – Eugene -, who started a life outside of the Kibera slum and whose progresses are extremely convincing.

Since October 2020, the young Jhyckxie, an extremely gifted young girl out of a poor Filipino family obtained a scholarship from the School of the Ballet Manila after having contacted Catherine Habasque on FaceBook and studied online with her during a few months.

FEEDBACKS

“ Dance, support of resilience for our sexually abused children

The two weeks of dance workshops (ballet, flamenco and contemporary dance) offered by the volunteers of "Dancers for the World" to our sexually assaulted girls was a magical time for all. Not only did the girls discover new artistic and physical forms, but they also took pleasure in borrowing the attitudes of the ballet dancers, proudly raising their heads during flamenco sessions and clapping their hands while shouting Olé !.



For young girls from poor backgrounds whose intimacy has been violated, rediscovering the pleasure of being in one's body is of ultimate importance. Gradually reconnecting with this body that has been abused, rediscovering its ability to move around in space, overcoming the shame of having been soiled by the joy of proudly performing on stage contribute to the rehabilitation of our young girls. The small representation on Health Day, where our young girls were able to demonstrate their talents in front of 300 other beneficiaries of the association, was a great moment of sharing and happiness for all.

Every day, the CAMELEON teams check the importance of the complementarity of our interventions. While basic care (protection, education, care) and psychosocial and legal followup are very important, young people also draw a lot of strength and courage from sporting, recreational and artistic activities such as circus, Tae kwon do or dance. It is the integration of these approaches and the multiplicity of supports of resilience that allows each person to find what makes them vibrate internally and to draw the resources they need to rebuild themselves and prepare for their future."

Sabine Claudio (Director Cameleon Philippines)

"It was just great. I don't know how to thank you for this opportunity. I remember everything, all the rehearsals, our disco and movie shows. You made this summer awesome, i'm sure not only for me. Many of the children had some complexes, but be sure that you've dissolved them. You helped them to fly, dance and enjoy this. We will never forget this summer."

Lisa (Participant to our courses in Tskaltubo, Georgia)

"I wanted to thank you both again for your time and energy and passion with our children and teachers. You were both incredibly flexible and accommodating and you created a fantastic show in just a few short days! The children were extremely grateful and I hear that some have been inspired to continue dancing!"

Sarah Whiteley (Responsible coordination Friends International)

COMMUNICATION

The Swiss Television SRF News produced a feature on DFW and the work done in time of Covid that was broadcasted in the evening news of Christmas Eve. <https://www.srf.ch/play/tv/tagesschau/video/dancers-for-the-world-bringt-tanz-in-fluechtlingslager-und-slums>

The program "Mitenand" by SRF 1 <https://www.srf.ch/sendungen/mitenand> flew with us to Lesbos in March 2019 and produced a reportage which was broadcast on two national channels, SRF1 in May and RSI in July.

We are also present on the following communication tools: Newsletter, interviews and event announcements in the print press, and on the radio, regular updating of our website and presence on social media: Youtube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram. We also promote our activities through the artistic events regularly produced by Catherine Habasque.

The development of the association has been followed with interest by the press since its foundation: <http://dfw-ch.com/humanitarian/media/>



TEAM

DFW was founded by and brings together international artists, people whose human qualities and professional experience enriches the group and whose empathy and skill enlighten the trips and serve our purpose. The traveling team is also surrounded by professionals in different areas of expertise.



CATHERINE HABASQUE - Founder and President - <http://www.catherine-habasque.ch/> Catherine Habasque was born in Paris where she studies Ballet and literature.

As a Principal Dancer, she worked with and interpreted master pieces of some of the most renowned choreographers of our time: Maurice Béjart, Nacho Duato, Jiri Kylian, William Forsythe, Ohad Naharin, Mats Ek and more.

She has been multiple times awarded: Best dancer of the year 2007 - Gold medal Arcachon international Prize – As a director: Finalist of the International Fedora Prize 2014 for Opera and Ballet.

Catherine Habasque danced in theatres worldwide, including Lincoln Center New York, Paris Opera, Bunkai Kaikan Tokyo, Fenice in Venezia and many more.

She started choreographing in 2002 in Theater Basel alongside her career as a soloist and became an independant producer in 2007. She created Dancers For the World / DFW in 2015.

JOS VERBEEK – Member / Advisor

Jos Verbeek is former Manager at World Bank group (WBG). He was the WBG Special Representative to the UN and the WTO in Geneva until July 2020. Prior to this, Mr. Verbeek was appointed Adviser and tasked with providing inputs in the WBG's approach to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. He worked for over 27 years for the World Bank across the globe.

CARLOS ITURRIOZ - Member / Advisor

Carlos Iturrioz has been a Soloist and Principal Dancer at Cullberg Ballet (Stockholm-Sweden), The Frankfurt Ballet (Germany), Arena of Verona (Italy). He has been the Assistant Director at Compañía Nacional de Danza (Madrid-Spain). As a choreographer he won the UNESCO Price Zonta « A Ballet Against Violence » and worked in Arena of Verona (Italy), The Frankfurt Ballet, and more. He is now the CEO of Mediart Productions (Spain) collaborating with Companies, Festivals and Theatres worldwide.



JULIE GODIGNON - Fundraising

Julie Godignon has been working as a Program manager for media development and press freedom in developing countries for more than 10 years. She joined DFW in March 2020 to support fundraising, new development, and impact measurement of activities.

JEAN-PHILIPPE DOUSSET - Consultant for Humanitarian and Logistics.

Jean-Philippe Dousset has been working as a doctor for more than 30 years in Cambodia and SouthEast Asia with Médecin sans Frontières, Médecins du Monde, FHI 360.

His long clinical experience brought him to concentrate on project management and since 5 years on the direction of the development of new health plans.

OLIVIA STREATER LAVIZZARI - Legal and Human Rights Advisor

Olivia Streater is a trained dance and movement therapist and dancer who began her career as an international human rights lawyer and researcher.

DANCERS FOR THE WORLD 2020 – 2015

SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR TALENTED CHILDREN 2019-20

Jhiykie

With the School of the Ballet Manila

<https://www.facebook.com/lisamacujaschool>

Contact: Lisa Macuja



Eugene

With Dance Center Kenya

<https://dancecentre.co.ke/>

Contact: Cooper Rust



**KENYA - Kibera Slum – 2019**

With Project Elimu

<https://projectelimu.org/>

Contact: Mike Wamaya

**GREECE – Lesbos, Moria refugees Camps 2019**

With One Happy Family

<https://ohf-lesvos.org/>

Contact: Estelle Jean

**CAMBODIA – Street children – 2018**

With Friends International

<https://friends-international.org/>

Contact: Sarah Whiteley

**GREECE - Lesbos refugee camp – 2018**

With One Happy Family

<https://ohf-lesvos.org/>

Contact: Estelle Jean





SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR TALENTED CHILDREN 2018

With Association Caméléon

<https://www.cameleon-association.org>

Contact: Sabine Claudio / Laurence Ligier



PHILIPPINEN 2016 / 17 / 18 - Underprivileged and sexually abused children

With Association Caméléon

<https://www.cameleon-association.org/>

Contact: Sabine Claudio / Laurence Ligier



GEORGIA 2015 / 16 - Displaced people

With the Artasfoundation

<http://www.artasfoundation.cntact>: Maja Leo





	ABROAD	BASEL Productions Funded separately but promoting DFW
2015		
'April 29 th .	International Dance Day 2015	A whole day of free workshops from different dance styles
September	Georgia with internal refugees with Artas	
3 / 9 / 10 November		Premiere „Violetta, Simone et moi“
2016		
13. März		„If music be the food of love“
April		Workshops in Kooperation mit dem Steps Festival
29. April	International Dance Day 2015	Free Workshops & guest performance „Through the open door“ with young refugees
Juli – August	Support of a school in the Himalayas in cooperation with the association Logarithme.	
September	Georgia, second trip	
Oktober – November	Philippines - Working with abused and disadvantaged children with Caméléon	
27 November		Premiere „ELLE – Entre chiens et loups
6. Dezember		Guest performance Madrid Dance Festival, Teatro de l'Abadia Madrid: „Violetta, Simone et moi.
2017		
2. April		Premiere "Einige Todsünden"
10 Juni		„ELLE entre chien et loup“ Reprise
Juli	Support Holly	
1. Oktober		„Einige Todsünden“ Reprise
November	Philippines - 2 nd trip	
2018		
May 4 th		„Premiere „HA-KI and more“
May	Lesbos – Moria camp with One Happy Family	
Juli	Cambodia – Street children with Friends International	
'September 20		Private performance in Basel
'September 29.		„HA_Kland more“ in Zurich, Guest performance
'October 17		Performance Archtekturtage
		Premiere „Unterwelt“
'November 18, 24		
'December 1.		„Einige Todsünden“ Reprise
December 7 th .		Premiere „Folias“
2019		
April	Lesbos – Moria camp	
June 7th		Premiere „The Ceremony“
August	Kenya – Ballet in the Kibera slum with Project Elimu	



September		„The Ceremony“ in Zürich
November 23 th. / Dec 15th		Performances „Swanns“
Dec 5 th .		Private Performance „Folias“ in Basel
2020		
February 2nd		„Folias“ in Paris
March	Lesbos – Moria camp - Delayed	
April	Kurdistan Camps with Bring Hope Foundation - Delayed	
August	Kenya – Kibera slums with Elimu Project - Delayed	
November 20 & 21		„Les Dépravées“ A production around La Traviata