

# Common goal explores social responsibility



Mats Hummels (file pic)

## Berlin

**M**ats Hummels, Juan Mata, Giorgio Chiellini and Julian Nagelsmann are among a growing number of footballers and coaches aware of football's social obligations and effect.

Joining the "Common goal" initiative the professionals from Germany, Spain, and Italy follow the dream, to improve life for young people around the world by donating at least one percent of their player's salary to football-related charity and education projects.

"This is the chance for football to make the world a better place and I want to be part of it," Bayern Munich defender and German international Hummels commented after he joined the Berlin-based initiative. Hummels said he has the feeling it could be done more to combine the rising revenues of football with a deeper meaning.

Footballers can choose from 127 projects in over 80 countries and regions supported by organizations such as UNICEF. Collaboration with the football associations, FIFA and UEFA and international companies is in progress.

Common goals claim projects benefit from 90 percent of the donations.

Common goal investigates the donor's views regarding projects and regions to address "his personal favours" as Griesbeck calls it. Over 2.5 million youngsters from South America to Asia currently benefit from the support. "We are uniting the world of footballers behind a shared commitment to giving back," Common goal says on its homepage.

It might be a coincidence that 2014 World Champion Hummels and Spanish 2010 World Cup winner and Manchester United professional Juan Mata increased the project's awareness just when transfer fees and salaries reached a new climax and football is facing discussions about unhealthy commercialism next to losing fans hearts and passion.

The Berlin-based initiative was found only a few months ago. The project founder, Juergen Griesbeck, went through hundreds of talks to promote what he calls "a social vision" of football and "an alliance that highlights the appeal and potential of what we are doing."

The pledged-based project is transporting football related values such as respect, fairness, team-spirit, and responsibility, Griesbeck emphasizes. "In recent years we have seen growing recognition of football's capacity to drive social development," Griesbeck said.

For many emerging countries and regions in Asia and around the world, it is helpful to support children education "to make

youngsters valuable a member of society," Griesbeck was quoted in a *Xinhua* interview.

Mata joining in on Aug. 4, 2017, had a domino effect as Hummels read about it as Juventus Turin professional Chiellini did follow by the German Bundesliga's youngest coach, 30-year-old Nagelsmann, Serge Gnabry (both TSG Hoffenheim) and VfB Stuttgart left-back Denis Aogo, who even donates two percent of his salary.

"For long I have been looking for how to use the power of football for social impact. I hope our example of donating has a snowball effect and many others join in," Nagelsmann commented.

While Nagelsmann prefers projects in Germany and Europe to "have the chance to be around despite working six and a half days a week", Mata is more internationally orientated and travelling around Mata the world to support projects.

"To see the poverty and the hard life of many young kids made me speechless," Mata said. "Football gives young people experience for life."

Common goal's general attempt is to gain investments of one percent of football's yearly revenues to charity, which is approximately up to 30 billion US dollars. A footballer earning one million euro per year donating 2 percent of his salary would invest 20,000 euros annually.

Juergen Griesbeck said his dream is to change the life of 100 million youngsters around the world until 2030. Now his desire is shared by football stars like Hummels, Mata, Chiellini, and Nagelsmann. (*xinhua*)

