

#Play4Kwibuka31 Programme Report

Football as a Field of Remembrance,
Education and Reconciliation



Kigali, Rwanda | April 26 – May 4 , 2025



ISHAMI
FOUNDATION





Executive Summary

#Play4Kwibuka31 was a community-based football and peace education initiative held in Kigali as part of the Kwibuka31 commemoration period. The programme honoured members of Rwanda's football community who were killed during the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, including players, coaches, referees, journalists and supporters.

The initiative engaged more than 500 youth participants and over 200 veteran players. Through football matches, peace education workshops, storytelling sessions and community dialogue, participants explored Rwanda's history while learning values of unity, empathy and responsible citizenship.

The programme was organised by the Former Amavubi Players Association (FAPA) and Ishami Foundation in partnership with community football academies and supported by the City of Kigali, the Ministry of Sport and Kepler University.

1. Background and Context

Football is one of Rwanda's most popular sports and an important social platform for youth engagement. During the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, Rwanda's football community suffered devastating losses. Many players, coaches, referees, sports journalists and supporters were killed.

Today, football can also serve as a powerful tool for education, remembrance and reconciliation. #Play4Kwibuka was created to connect remembrance with youth development through football.

2. Programme Objectives

- Honour the memory of football community members killed during the genocide.
- Promote genocide education and remembrance among young people.
- Encourage unity, empathy and social cohesion through sport.
- Empower youth through football-based learning and leadership opportunities.
- Strengthen partnerships between football organisations, communities and educational institutions.

3. Programme Activities

3.1 Opening Commemoration Ceremony

The programme began with a wreath-laying ceremony at the Kigali Genocide Memorial, where families, former teammates and members of the football community paid tribute to those who lost their lives during the genocide. Survivor testimonies provided participants with important historical context and personal reflections.

3.2 Youth Football Activities

Commemorative football matches were organised for boys and girls aged 13–16, alongside exhibition matches involving veteran players. Matches were hosted at Pele Stadium, Tapis Rouge grounds and Kepler University sports facilities.



3.3 Peace Education Sessions

Participants engaged in peace education sessions exploring key Rwandan values including Ndi Umunyarwanda, Kwigira and Kwibuka. Activities included storytelling, group discussions and reflection sessions connecting sport with community responsibility.

4. Participation

Category	Participants
Youth football players	500+
Veteran players	200+
Community coaches	30+
Partner organisations	10+
Volunteers and facilitators	40+

5. Key Outcomes and Impact

- Young participants gained deeper awareness of Rwanda’s history and remembrance.
- Football activities strengthened unity, teamwork and social cohesion.
- Youth engaged with national values such as Ndi Umunyarwanda and Kwigira.
- Veteran players provided mentorship and inspiration for the younger generation.

6. Future Plans

- Expand #Play4Kwibuka activities to other districts across Rwanda.
- Develop coach education programmes in sport-based peacebuilding.
- Establish school-based remembrance and football clubs.
- Strengthen partnerships with educational institutions and youth organisations.

7. Photo Highlights



Members of the football community gather at the Kigali Genocide Memorial for a wreath-laying ceremony, paying tribute to the victims of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi and reaffirming their commitment to remembrance, unity, and “Never Again.”



ISHAMI
FOUNDATION



Youth players and members of the football community stand together in reflection during the commemorative ceremony, honoring the victims of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi and reaffirming the role of football in remembrance, unity, and building a peaceful future.



Boys' and girls' teams honor members of the football community who were victims of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi before taking part in the Play4Kwibuka31 tournament. The moment also serves as a time for reflection through dialogue and shared learning, highlighting the role of football in promoting unity, resilience, and peace.



ISHAMI
FOUNDATION



Participants engage in peace education and reflection sessions, using dialogue and shared learning to reflect on the lessons of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi and the role of football in promoting unity, resilience, and peace.



Play4Kwibuka31 tournament awards ceremony celebrating participation, sportsmanship, and the shared commitment to remembrance, unity, and peace through football.



Team FAPA honoring members of Rwanda's football community who were killed during the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, paying tribute through remembrance and solidarity within the spirit of football.

8. CONTACT INFORMATION

Ishami Foundation



Gacuriro, Kinyinya, Kigali, Rwanda



www.ishamifoundation.org



info@ishamifoundation.org

Former Amavubi Players Association (FAPA)



[@FAPA_Rwanda](https://twitter.com/FAPA_Rwanda)



faparwa1@gmail.com