



High jump project for social development in Rwanda



jump up!
RWANDA

A project of ESPERANCE - Association des Jeunes Sportifs de Kigali

“It will be great for me to see that high jump will be one of the most popular sports in this country again and that it creates new perspectives for young people in Rwanda!”

(Déo Ngunga, 80 years, one of Rwanda’s last living ITORERO high jumpers)



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PROLOGUE

In the spring of 1994, the Rwandan genocide claimed more than one million lives within 100 days. Today, 14 years later, our population still is suffering from its consequences, especially those stricken with trauma and poverty. On the other hand, a deep sincerity in dealing with the past has spread around the country and an intensive interest in creating a united and reconciled Rwanda is evident everywhere in our society. In this process, sport has proven to be an efficient tool in solving our problems, especially with regards to future perspectives of the young generation.

Using the reconciliation potential of sports, Rwandan tradition offers a discipline with a unique historical significance: high jump. This sport held cult status for centuries and so fascinated the European expeditions of the 19th century that they thoroughly documented the high jump events.

This most traditional of all Rwandan sports, known as “Gusimbuka-Urukiramende” was practised halfway through the 20th century and then gradually lost importance. Today this distinctive expression of Rwandan culture has disappeared completely from public life, even as an athletic discipline.

In its time, the high jump discipline was taught at the so called Itorero Schools, which every king or chief in a region would support for sportive and military basic education. For centuries this discipline was a permanent part and the highlight of the traditional “Ibiroli”-contest arranged by the kings or chiefs and at which the best contestants of the regional games would compete. When these schools were closed due to the arrival of the Belgian colonial power the sport completely disappeared from the population’s memory. Nonetheless, there still are eye witnesses who vividly recall the sport and it is fascinating to share their excitement by the mere mentioning of the sport.



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IDEA

The project „Jump up Rwanda!“ aims to re-establish high jumping activities and revive the interest in this sport, thereby contributing to the social development of the country on a long term basis. In doing so, the fascination and enthusiasm of the Rwandan people for this discipline will be used to encourage intercultural dialogue, health care (HIV prevention), peace promotion, conflict management and – last but not least – the development of sportive talent.

The programme is directed at children and youth, girls as well as boys, between the age of 8 and 19 and seeks to combine tradition with the present in a unique connection with sports, culture and social development.



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REALIZATION

A. Under the direction of ex-high jumpers from the Itorero schools, trainers, pedagogues, psychologists and project coordinators children and youths of both sexes will have the opportunity to practise high jump at Maison de Jeunes Kimisagara, a Kigali based centre for Culture, Sports and Peace Building. The children and youths between the age of 8 and 19 are thereby given the opportunity to participate in training sessions in the official age categories of the international athletic association twice a week.

B. The project will reach out towns and rural areas in Rwanda. Mobile teams will regularly pull up in the numerous small communes in “Jump up! Rwanda”-buses (equipped with the necessary gear such as mats, poles etc.) offering countrywide training sessions for the local young population.

The central objectives of the project are interwoven in the training units in a playful manner. Former high jumpers from the Itorero Schools recount the history of high jumping (cultural work: Using memory activity of sport for motivation), pedagogically schooled workers provide information about the dangers of HIV and, together with the youths work out strategies of conflict management within the competitive character of sports. Following the sport history traditions in Rwanda, regional and national competitions will take place on a regular basis. On these occasions, the youths will not only qualify by sportive accomplishments but also by outstanding social skills.

C. Selected Rwandan youths will have the opportunity to participate in North-South-Exchange Programmes, particularly between high jumpers from Rwanda and the former colonial powers Belgium and Germany. Another regular exchange will take place with the neighbouring countries of the Great Lakes Regions – The Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania – with whom Rwanda is politically, historically and socially closely connected.

- Detailed listing of activities: Staff workshops
- Training sessions in Kigali
- Nationwide outreach training units
- Regular competition events (national and regional)
- South – North and South – South exchange programmes



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OBJECTIVES

- Use sport/high jump for the social development of children and youngsters in Rwanda and the Great Lakes Region (health promotion/HIV-prevention, poverty reduction, intercultural dialogue, work on conflicts, peace promotion)
- Implement sport / high jumping as an instrument for health care / health awareness and AIDS/HIV prevention, encourage the intercultural dialogue, conflict management and peace promotion.
- Offer a visual contribution in the creation of a new Rwanda
- Revive the high jumping tradition and stimulate the interest of especially the younger Rwandan population in the discipline.

VISION

Participation of a high jumper from „Jump up Rwanda! “ at the Olympic Games in London 2012

TARGET GROUP

Children and youngsters from Kigali and further regions of Rwanda and the Great Lakes Region (age 8-19)

RESPONSIBILITY

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ENVISIONED PARTNERS

Rwandan Ministry of Culture and Sports (MINISPOC)
Institute of National Museums of Rwanda
German Development Service (DED) / Civil Peace Programme (ZFD)
Jumelage Rheinland-Pfalz Partnership Rwanda
Inteko Izibikana (Rwandan Association of Elders)

ENVISIONED SUPPORTERS

Laureus Sports for Good Foundation
Swiss Working Group on Sport and Development
International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA)

ENVISIONED SPONSORS

Nike Go-Sport for social change
MTN Rwanda
Other sport companies

ENVISIONED MEDIA PARTNERS

RADIO RWANDA
Deutsche Welle
BBC Sport



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CORE TEAM

Donatien Nsengimana – Managing director/ Esperance
Déo Ngunga – Former Intore and Coach
Simon Schneider – Sponsoring, Communication director

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