For the second time in only 14 months, all eyes will be on Rwanda's capital Kigali, when the YDF Africa Tour embarks on a 15-day tour through seven African countries on 1 May 2010. In February 2009 Kigali was the starting point of the YDF Peace Caravan that toured the countries of the Great Lakes Region. 'Strong Youth, Strong Africa' is the message that the Africa Tour will convey this time to the citizens of YDF's partner countries Rwanda, Zambia, Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Mozambique ahead of the first FIFA World Cup™ on African soil. It will use the power of the ball to promote the unique and holistic approach of youth development through football and to address social and political priorities in the respective countries. YDF has recorded best practices on youth development through football in a training curriculum for coaches, with none other than football legend Desiree Ellis introducing it during the tour. 'We are proud that we could win the former Banyana Banyana captain and current World Cup Ambassador over to test the YDF tool, help coaches to encourage and strengthen the social behaviour of children and youths, and assist social workers in meeting the expectations of children with a passion for football', says GTZ Country Director Peter Conze.

Youth Development through Football (YDF) is a supranational programme implemented in ten African countries with its hub in South Africa. The project started in 2007 and will run until 2012. It is operated by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) on behalf of the German Government and in partnership with the Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa (SRSA). The project forms an important part of the South African–German FIFA World Cup 2010TM cooperation, and is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and co-funded by the European Union (EU). YDF uses the popularity of football to promote youth development, particularly that of disadvantaged girls and boys, and involves them in non-formal education and other support measures to keep them off the streets and help them influence their future prospects in a positive manner. YDF cooperates with governmental and non-governmental institutions and also with the private sector. The prevention of HIV and AIDS and of crime and violence are core topics. In addition, the project raises environmental awareness and fosters values such as friendship, team spirit and gender equality.

YDF regards the qualification of the coaches as crucial to its development objective. Vernie Petersen, Director General of SRSA, explains why: 'Coaches serve as role models and have a major impact on the future of the girls and boys they train. We want football coaches to learn how to be social workers too; likewise, we want social workers to become football coaches'.

The Africa Tour aims to create an attractive platform for YDF's partners to showcase their achievements thus far within the project to a broad audience, thereby increasing their motivation and dedication in the wake of the World Cup. The tour features one-day events in each of the countries, with partner country Ghana taking part in the Rwandan event. All events comprise the introduction of the YDF Manual for Coaches with a one-hour training session for coaches conducted by Desiree Ellis, a football tournament and a life-skills programme. Nevertheless, the life skills that are taught and the messages that are conveyed will differ, as each of the participating countries has chosen a theme according to its country's social and political priorities and resulting needs. 'Different, but one' is therefore the common thread running through the Africa Tour. To represent this unity, each country has chosen a defining symbol characteristic of that country, which will be passed on to the caravan's subsequent partner country - similar to the torch that is relayed ahead of the Olympic games.

'Sport in general, and especially football, has turned out to be a powerful tool for youth development', concludes YDF Project Manager Gerald Guskowski. 'The Africa Tour that kicks off in Kigali on 1 May 2010 aims to build momentum and create a buzz in communities that will remain long after the final whistle of the World Cup has blown. It will offer the participating countries a platform to show the world what Africa is capable of achieving. Together, we will seize the moment and plant seeds of growth, development and sustainability that will grow and flourish far beyond the World Cup.'
Strong Youth, Strong Africa

Example Training Session taken from the "YDF Manual for Coach Training"

The YDF Manual for Coaches is the YDF-tool to realise the football-targets of the project. It is aimed at Footballers and Social Workers. Target of this Manual is to combine the different perspectives of both, to make social workers out of football coaches and football coaches out of social workers.

To realise this, the Manual combines football basic training with life skills. The first of the Manual contains training sessions for the target groups: children, youths/teenagers, girls and goalkeepers. The second part focuses on general demands like football and health (HIV/AIDS, Water Sanitation), football and environment, youth participation, and violence prevention, and shows how to combine these topics with football exercises.

Click here to download the Example Training Session >>
'Strong Youth, Strong Africa' kicked off in Kigali

Kigali, 1 May 2010. "The future of the continent is in the hands of our youth." These were the words echoed by Fatuma Abdulkadir Adan, a representative from the Horn of Africa Development Initiative in Kenya, who took part in the opening ceremony of the ‘Strong Youth, Strong Africa’ tour on 1 May 2010 in Rwanda’s capital of Kigali. He was one of many guests from both African and international governmental and non-governmental organisations as well as from YDF’s partner country, Ghana, that joined the kick-off of YDF’s ‘Strong Youth, Strong Africa’ tour at the Kimisagara Sport Centre. More than 2000 spectators had the ‘land of a thousand hills’ - as Rwanda is also known - buzzing with excitement when they participated in football, music and cultural activities.

The theme of the day ‘Cultural Diversity: Different but One’ was embraced by all, and with youth delegates from Rwanda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Ghana and Uganda, this theme was entirely appropriate. One of the highlights of the day was the ‘Different but One' speech, during which representatives from each country explained to the audience what ‘Strong Youth, Strong Africa’ means to them.

The much-anticipated YDF Toolkit also made its public debut, with none other than former Banyana Banyana captain and 2010 FIFA World CupTM Ambassador Desiree Ellis performing the role of toolkit instructor. Twenty-five youths from the community were privileged to be the first to be taken through the exhibition, which included football training sessions integrating field cleanliness, HIV/AIDS and teamwork within the activities. “The toolkit has the potential to be very effective for the youth, and is something that can be adapted to suit varying needs and conditions,” says Desiree Ellis, who was very pleased with how it was received.

‘Strong Youth, Strong Africa’ is the message the second YDF caravan is conveying to the people of seven African countries. The 15-day tour from Rwanda to Zambia, Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Mozambique will promote the message and the unique, holistic approach of youth development through football. In addition, it will address social and political priorities in the countries and create an attractive platform for YDF’s partners both to showcase their programmes and the impact they are having on the youth.

A gift will be passed from country to country during the course of the tour to represent a symbolic chain. In an emotional handover ceremony, Ghana presented a ‘Symbol of Unity’ to Rwanda: this handmade wooden figurine stands for unity in Africa and has a football, signed by all the Ghanaian network partners, resting on it.

The touring team set off on Sunday to the next station on the tour - Livingstone, Zambia, where the programme is set to unfold on 3 May.
Play Clean, We Win! – For a healthy community!

Livingstone, 3 May 2010. ‘Play Clean, We Win! – For a healthy community’ was the theme of the day as the ‘Strong Youth, Strong Africa’ tour stopped over in Zambia’s capital of Livingstone on 3 May 2010. The streets of the small village of Libuyu, located in the vicinity of Livingstone, were alight with song and dance as a flamboyant parade led by the Salvation Army Brass Band made its way from the local market to the Youth Community Training Centre. Participating youth teams held colourful banners with slogans displaying the theme. The opening ceremony was highlighted by the presence of, and keynote address by, the Minister of Southern Province, DanielMunkombwe. Also present to celebrate the day was the Local District Commissioner of Libuyu, as well as representatives from the Zambia Youth Development through Football project, the Devolution Trust Fund (DTF) and the National Water Supply and Sanitation Council. The event was jointly organised by YDF’s non-governmental partners in Zambia: EduSport and the Breakthrough Sports Academy.

An estimated 400 youths representing the community from Libuyu took part in the day’s activities, whose theme of water-sanitation awareness and education was in strong evidence. GTZ, in partnership with DTF and the National Water Supply and Sanitation Council, had integrated the aspect of football into various stations providing education on water sanitation and hygiene, and a 7-a-side football tournament culminated in an exciting final. It saw the Super Strikers and Dream Team compete, with the Super Strikers emerging victorious. The YDF Toolkit was once again a highlight for participants and guests alike, having special significance as the component of water sanitation was included in the toolkit as a result of the GTZ Water-Sector Reform Programme in Zambia.

Continuing the link between the partner countries, YDF’s non-governmental Rwandan partner Esperance handed over a gift to EduSport during the closing ceremony. It was presented in the form of a Rwandan handmade basket containing a T-shirt made especially for the opening ceremony in Kigali. The YDF team is already on its way to the next station of the ‘Strong Youth, Strong Africa’ tour: Namibia’s capital, Windhoek.
Celebrating the World Cup

Windhoek, 5 May 2010. “The 2010 World Cup is an outstanding platform for strengthening partnerships and broadening networks,” said Romeo Bertolini, Counsellor for Development Cooperation at the German Embassy in Windhoek. Together with representatives from the German Embassy in Windhoek, the South African High Commission, the Department of Sport, GTZ Namibia, and GTZ/YDF, Bertolini watched the final matches of the Mini World Cup played at the Sam Nujoma Stadium in Windhoek, Namibia. Windhoek is the third destination in YDF’s ‘Strong Youth, Strong Africa’ tour. The Mini World Cup was hosted by YDF-Namibia in partnership with the South African High Commission and the Namibia Football Association. It included thirty-two youth teams of mixed gender, which participated in the tournament played on a 7-a-side basis.

Emphasising the priority of gender balance and equality, each team was required to include 3 females, enabling them to play on an equal footing with the male participants. Each team also ‘represented’ a nation that is competing in the 2010 FIFA World Cup™.

Romeo Bertolini’s statement was enforced by the fact that the partnership between YDF-Namibia and the South African High Commission will see twelve of the 32 teams in the YDF Mini World Cup adopted by those Namibian Embassies and High Commissions whose teams have qualified for the World Cup. The plan is for these diplomatic missions to adopt the schools and assist with coaching and football equipment before, during and after the Mini World Cup. Through this initiative, YDF-Namibia and the South African High Commission will create a tangible legacy with associated benefits for the Namibian schools selected. The World Cup atmosphere was heightened by the presence of a large figurine of Zakumi - the official 2010 FIFA World Cup™ mascot - who drew the attention of the children and adults alike, all seeking a photograph with the colourful figure.

With the team of toolkit instructors, represented by Desiree Ellis and Lebo Tlomatsane, growing in confidence with each event, the toolkit presentation that took place at the Sam Nujoma Stadium was once again a highlight of the day. Eighteen girls and boys between the ages of 16 and 18 formed part of the training group, which was guided through four exercises from the toolkit manual. “So far, we have tested the toolkit on youths from 12 to 18 years of age, and it has proved to be useful and adaptable right across these age groups”, said former Banyana Banyana captain and 2010 FIFA Ambassador, Desiree Ellis. The presentation was keenly observed by 28 club coaches and representatives from participating clubs.

In keeping with the tradition of handing over a gift to the next country, YDF Project Manager Gerald Guskowski presented Zambia’s ‘Toilet Cup’ to Namibia. As the theme for Zambia was water sanitation and hygiene awareness, the gift resembled a ceramic toilet with a handmade football resting on it, and was proudly branded with the YDF logo. The gift was gratefully accepted by Isack Hamata, event coordinator and YDF-Namibia representative. He in turn presented the gift from Namibia to Botswana, the tour’s next stopover on 7 May 2010.
Ramotswa, 7 May 2010. It was a colourful procession that threaded its way at 9 o’clock in the morning from the middle of town to the Youth Centre at Ramotswa Village, where the ‘Strong Youth, Strong Africa’ tour had stopped over in Botswana. More than 300 children carried the flags of the 32 national teams that will take part in the 2010 World Cup™ through the streets. YDF’s partner in Botswana – the ‘South East District Youth Empowerment League’ (SEDYEL) - had chosen ‘Youth, Health and HIV/AIDS’ as its motto for the event, and impressed GTZ Country Director for South Africa, Botswana and Lesotho, Peter Conze, with the performance it put on: “It is inspiring to see how well SEDYEL understands how to combine football with the life skills important to the girls and boys of Botswana.” During the course of the day, representatives from the European Union, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the National Olympic Committee, the Botswana Football League and GTZ/YDF were thoroughly entertained by the diverse programme of football competition, life-skills games and cultural activities.

For the simulation of the World Cup tournament in which girls’ and boys’ teams represented the participating countries, importance was placed not only on scoring goals; in addition, all the teams had to participate in so-called ‘Intelligence Shows’. “They have to answer simple questions on HIV/AIDS, and the points they earn will add up to more goals scored,” explained Modiri Pikashe, Acting Director of SEDYEL. Besides the football-related HIV/AIDS awareness activities, conveyed inter alia through the performing arts, a voluntary HIV testing and counseling station was open all day for the youth.

“It’s clear that SEDYEL has done extraordinary work with these kids, especially where HIV/AIDS is concerned, as they have been picking up the exercises impressively easily!” lauded former Banyana Banyana team captain, Desiree Ellis, when she demonstrated the use of the YDF Toolkit. After the games, SEDYEL’s directors Kitso Masi and Modiri Pikashe were showered with gifts from former ‘Strong Youth, Strong Africa’ event host, the Namibia Football Association. Not only did they receive the Namibian YDF-Ball, but also the Namibian flag and a statue of a San bushman, as both Namibia and Botswana are home to these indigenous hunter-gathering people of southern Africa. Finally, in the tradition of linking the YDF partner countries, Botswana presented the gifts for the next country on the tour: Lesotho.

“It was the biggest event that we have ever hosted,” commented an overwhelmed Kitso Masi at the end of the day. “The excitement at the SEDYEL Youth Centre was palpable, not only about the event itself, but also about the World Cup that is soon to kick off in neighbouring South Africa.” “Rea ba tsaya – We’re taking them!” became the battle cry of the day and was voiced repeatedly by the Master of Ceremonies as well as by the excited children and youths in Ramotswa Village. With ‘Nigeria’ coming out tops on the boys’ side and ‘Ghana’ on the girls’, it was two African teams that won the simulated World Cup in Botswana that day - and the participants just took it as a sign for the World Cup ahead.
Remogo! – United! - Strong Youth, Strong Africa

Maseru, 9 May 2010. The day started out cold and wet in Maseru, but this did little to dampen the enthusiasm of the youngsters who had gathered at the Maseru Sport Club to celebrate the ‘Strong Youth, Strong Africa’ tour stopover in Lesotho. The programme kicked off with a grand march through the streets. Waving their banners high up in the air and shouting team battle cries, the teams stormed through the streets of the capital, competing in a fierce race to see which one would reach the venue first. 150 children made up the 10 teams that participated in the tournament. Altogether, close to 600 people had gathered at the Maseru Sport Club, many of them in support of their team-mates.

The event was graced by the presence of many high-profile delegates representing the embassies and consulates from various countries, among them ambassadors from the Republic of Ireland, the United States of America, the European Union, the High Commissioner for the Republic of South Africa, and the Deputy Ambassador of Germany to South Africa. Representatives from various community, regional and national media houses, including Lesotho TV, were also present.

In the official welcome address Puisano Tsosane, Director of Sports in the Ministry of Youth & Gender, Sports & Recreation, acknowledged the hard work and tireless efforts of ‘Kick4Life’, YDF’s partner in Lesotho. He praised the organisation for its unwavering dedication to bettering the lives of young orphans and street children in and around Maseru.

In addition to the championship knockout games, the children present at the event participated in various educational and life-skills sessions. Football-related HIV/AIDS awareness activities were complemented with a voluntary HIV testing and counseling station, which was open for the youth all day long. The theatre group ‘Make Theatre Make a Difference’ staged an excellent performance with an ‘imaginary’ football match: Two teams competed against each other with players named Peer Pressure, Unprotected Sex and Condom among others, linesmen Culture and Policy assisted the referee, and young Kick4Life volunteers were used as live radio commentators. The match, played with an imaginary ball, used football to promote HIV/AIDS awareness. Before leaving the grounds, 400 participants and spectators formed a human chain in the shape of the universal red HIV/AIDS ribbon.

The programme ended with the awarding of gifts and trophies to the winning teams, and the exchange of country gifts. YDF Project Manager Gerald Guskowski presented the gift from SEDYEL - books on the cultural heritage of Botswana and a historical textbook, both wrapped in the Botswana national flag. In return, Kick4Life Director Pete Fleming presented YDF with the gift for the next station, Swaziland. With it went a strong message from the youth of Lesotho, wishing Swaziland as successful an event as they had experienced in Maseru.

As the day drew to a close, the battle cry of the teams resounded in the ears of the participants and felt entirely appropriate considering all the participating young orphans and street children:

"Ha nke ke ka fela matla!" - "I'll never lose hope!"

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NEWSLETTER: ‘Strong Youth, Strong Africa’ Special Edition

Linking Sports & Culture for ‘Strong Youth, Strong Africa!’

Lobamba, 11 May 2010. The festivities of the ‘Strong Youth, Strong Africa!’ station in Lobamba, Swaziland, began with a parade on the grounds of the national stadium. The march was led by drum majorettes, accompanying flag-bearers who paraded the Strong Youth, Strong Africa banner as well as the FIFA Fair Play flag. The latter was an expression of support for the promotion of ‘Fair Play, Social Inclusion and Team Spirit’, the theme chosen for this sixth stopover event of the YDF World Cup 2010 tour.

Prior to the parade, the 250 youngsters had participated in formal cultural lessons where they were engaged in discussions led by community elders. This component of the programme entailed lessons on adolescence and the changes that come with it. The sessions lasted 30 minutes each and were used to confront other community-related matters such as HIV/AIDS, health & hygiene, poverty alleviation and crime prevention. In keeping with Swazi tradition, the boys and girls were separated: an elderly woman facilitated the session with the girls while the boys’ session was overseen by an elderly man. The principal activity of the day was the knockout soccer tournament for under-15 boys and girls teams. A total of 8 junior rural teams (2 per region), with both male and female categories, competed in the tournament.

Ngwazini Junior Ladies Team emerged as the winners of the girls’ teams finals of the tournament beating Lobamba, with Siteki hammering Ngwazini 4:1 in the boys’ section. The winners in both categories received a soccer kit for the entire team, training material and balls sponsored by YDF. The occasion was graced by the presence of the Vice-Chairperson, Sikhatsi Dlamini, as well as the board members and management of the Swaziland National Sports Council (SNSC). All local media houses were also present.

Dlamini thanked GTZ for supporting the sport-for-development initiatives in Swaziland. He said the objective of SNSC was to build a nation through sport, and events such as the one held on 11 May helped to make that objective a reality. Having watched the teams at play, Gerald Guskowski, Project Manager of YDF, commented that the future of football in Swaziland was promising and he urged the authorities to put in extra effort in encouraging young people to engage more in the sport.

The programme culminated in the presentation of awards and trophies to the winning teams and the exchange of country gifts. YDF presented Sikhatsi Dlamini with the gift from Lesotho partner Kick4Life: a traditional Basotho hat and blanket with a message of encouragement from the Basotho youth. SNSC in turn handed over the gift for the next country of the YDF World Cup Country tour - Mozambique - to Gerald Guskowski.
NEWSLETTER: ‘Strong Youth, Strong Africa’ Special Edition

Juventude forte – para uma Africa forte! (Strong Youth for a Strong Africa)

Manica, 15 May 2010. On 15 May 2010 YDF’s fourteen-day ‘Strong Youth, Strong Africa’ tour came to an after visiting Namibia, Zambia, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. ‘A Strong and Healthy Community’ was the final theme. The tour stopped over in the City of Manica in Manica Province, Central Mozambique. The Municipal Football Stadium of Manica, which is located only 15 km from the border with Zimbabwe, was full of song and dance when representatives from the Provincial Ministry for Youth and Sport, Mozambique Water and Sanitation Programme, the Mozambican Football Federation, and the City of Manica, with support provided by GTZ’s Decentralisation and HIV/AIDS-Prevention project based in Chimoio, Manica’s provincial capital.

The first speech was delivered by a young coach who explained that work to change social behaviour among young people was not always easy. The coaches promised to increase their efforts in their coaching sessions even further, however, so that results could be achieved which would make the community proud. He highlighted that football was the ideal instrument to bring people together, and that YDF was making a great contribution towards strengthening community sports initiatives and increasing the youth’s motivation not only to be good athletes, but also worthy role models.

After the keynote addresses and speeches, a local theatre group entertained the audience by presenting a traditional Mozambican dance and musical performance. The Mozambican youth, which was received on their behalf by the Mayor of the City of Manica. It was presented in the form of a traditional brew mug and meat bowl with an official FIFA ball on top symbolising the common values passed on from country to country through football. The Mozambican youth, proud that Manica was the last stop prior to the World Cup 2010TM kick-off on 11 June 2010, reciprocated by offering a traditional batuque (drum) and capulana (traditional cloth) depicting Maria Lurdes Mutola, Mozambican Olympic medal winner in 2000 - again with a handmade football on top to which personal messages were attached. In his closing remarks, Moguene Candieiro thanked GTZ/YDF for having chosen his city as the last stop of the ‘Strong Youth, Strong Africa’ tour, and reiterated that it was an honour for the Mozambican youth and his city to have played a small role in the build-up to the first World Cup ever to take place on African soil in neighbouring South Africa.

In keeping with the tradition of handing over a gift to the next country, YDF Project Manager Gerald Guskowski presented Zambia’s ‘Toilet Cup’ to Manica, Zambia. The Mozambican youth and his city to have played a small role in the build-up to the first World Cup ever to take place on African soil in neighbouring South Africa.

The Municipal Football Stadium of Manica, which is located only 15 km from the border with Zimbabwe, was full of song and dance when representatives from the Provincial Ministry for Youth and Sport, Mozambique Water and Sanitation Programme, the Mozambican Football Federation, and the City of Manica, with support provided by GTZ’s Decentralisation and HIV/AIDS-Prevention project based in Chimoio, Manica’s provincial capital.

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During the awards ceremony, participants of the day receive a golden medal displaying Mozambican icon, Maria Lurdes Mutola.
Let the strength of the youth create a strong Africa

A report on the Africa Tour by South African Ambassador and tour member, Desiree Ellis.

Pretoria, 18 May 2010. We left South Africa on 29 April 2010 and arrived that same evening in Rwanda. The next day we visited the Kimisagara Sports Centre in Kigali. Esperance went the extra mile and invited youth leaders from Rwanda, Ghana, Uganda, Kenya, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo, all of whom gathered at the Sports Centre.

The youth spoke about being the leaders of today and tomorrow and the question "are we all the same or are we different?" was asked. There was a huge debate, which was very interesting, but at the end I was still not sure how to answer the question. What is clear is this: we have different cultures and backgrounds, but we yearn for the same thing - a strong Africa.

What really amazed me was just how passionate the youth leaders are. They spoke about us all having different cultures and the inherent dichotomy of this reality at times. The South African youth fought against apartheid, yet were at the forefront of xenophobia, for example. Youths from different countries gave presentations on the areas they hail from and the issues and challenges they face. They also gave a short summary of the youth programmes they run and dreamt aloud about having one language spoken all over Africa. They talked about tolerance, the struggles of the women of today and about the youth not taking education seriously. The evening ended with each youth group doing cultural dances and other activities.

We were back at the Kimisagara Sports Centre on 1 May. We listened attentively to a 'Different but One' speech, during which representatives from each country explained to the audience what 'Strong Youth, Strong Africa' meant to them. Finally, it was time for the YDF Toolkit demonstration. The biggest challenge was the language and it was admittedly very difficult in the beginning. Together with YDF team member Lebogang Tomatsane (Lebo), I demonstrated a few exercises and with the help of the interpreter, we finally managed to complete the exhibition. This included football training sessions into which field cleanliness, HIV/AIDS and teamwork were incorporated.

The locals were extremely curious about the events taking place and could been seen sitting on the hills during the day’s activities, watching it all with interest. Ghana presented a ‘Symbol of Unity’ to Rwanda: this handmade wooden figurine, which is really many figurines intertwined, stands for unity in Africa and has a football resting on it. A gift was then also handed over for Zambia, the next scheduled stop on our tour. The day ended with a few well-known local artists’ getting the children singing and dancing.

We left Kigali on Sunday, 2 May and arrived in Zambia the same afternoon. We then left for Livingstone in one of the smallest planes I have ever been in. It was my first experience on such a small plane and after being nervous at first, I even dozed off on a few occasions. On arrival in Livingstone, we immediately left for the Youth Community Training Centre in Libuyu to meet with the peer educators and also see the venue.

On 3 May we all met at the local market and the Salvation Army Brass Band led us on a parade through the streets to the Youth Community Training Centre for the day’s events. The youth teams held banners with the following slogans: ‘Don’t give unsafe water a chance!’; ‘Don’t give worms and improper toilets a chance!’; ‘Don’t give contamination a chance!’; ‘Don’t give unmanaged waste a chance!’; and ‘Play clean, we win! - For a healthy community’. Water problems exist not only in Zambia, but also in many neighbouring countries.

The participants of the events came from EduSport and the Breakthrough Sports Academy. While some teams were playing, others were at the different stations learning about football and safe water usage; football and hand-washing with soap; football and worm infestation; and football, solid waste disposal and stagnant water. The peer educators were well organised and I found the stations very impressive. One female coach explained that she became interested at school when youths were being recruited to be trained as peer educators. She not only enjoys learning, but is also helping to make a difference in her community. Even though the coaches are very young, they have a huge role to play in both in enabling the youth to play the game and in developing them. The province is very active in sport and is using sport as a platform to showcase various issues.

The tournament was also well organised and the teams well structured. All had young girls participating, and what was really interesting was that the girls were the key players and set-piece specialists: taking corners and free kicks and doing throw-ins. The toolkit demonstration was once again the highlight and we got our message across to the coaches. This included football training sessions integrating field cleanliness, trust and teamwork in the activities. The tournament continued and the Super Strikers emerged victorious after beating the Dream Team. A gift from Esperance was handed over to EduSport during the closing ceremony. It was presented in the form of a Rwandan handmade basket containing a T-shirt made especially for the opening ceremony in Kigali. A gift was then also handed over for Namibia.

Continued...
We left for Namibia on 4 May, making our way to the Sam Nujoma Stadium in Windhoek on 5 May. The South African High Commissioner spoke to the youth about opportunities and how they should grab these opportunities with both hands. Although many times we seem to blame our failure on peer pressure, admittedly our friends do not throw the liquor down our throats and they do not smoke the drugs for us. The South African High Commission and the Namibia Football Association were partners in organising the event. The South African High Commission supplied all the teams with playing kit and the embassies of various countries supplied resources and coaches to assist teams in preparing for the tournament. Four community teams, twelve school teams and sixteen teams from the league participated in a 32-team World Cup format, with each team’s having three girls on the pitch at all times. It was very humbling to see the National Namibian Boys U-20 team volunteer as referees for the matches and for other portfolios during the tournament. A large figurine of Zakumi was once again the centre of attraction, with both young and old taking photos at will.

The team was well demonstrated by the older children; previously we had used younger children. The coaches were extremely keen to know more about the demonstration, and said that they found it a very interesting learning tool. They believed that it would be useful for their communities. The Namibia Football Association runs a programme over weekends that keeps approximately 170 children off the street. A gift from Zambia was handed over to Isack Hamata. As the theme for Zambia was water sanitation and hygiene awareness, the gift resembled a ceramic toilet with a handmade football resting on it. To conclude events, a gift was then also handed over for Botswana.

We left Windhoek on 5 May, arriving in South Africa later that evening. We drove to Botswana on 6 May and made our way to Ramotswa, where we met with the peer educators of SEDYEL (South Eastern Development Youth Empowerment League) about the programme. On 7 May we were led by a band and drum majorettes on a forty-minute walk to the Youth Centre at Ramotswa Village. The participants carried flags representing the thirty-two nations that will be taking part in the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ in South Africa. The tournament comprised both girls and boys in the U-13 and U-17 age groups. The day was about both football and life skills, however: Teams would not only be awarded points for matches, but two members of each team also had to attend a life-skills session. They had to answer questions related mainly to HIV/AIDS. These points were added to the ones earned during the matches to determine the final winners. The programme presented by the Ministry of Health was unique, creative and innovative. A major challenge faced in Botswana is alcohol abuse among the youth and pictures of bottles touting messages such as ‘Pregnancy Spirit’, ‘Accident Lager’ or ‘Suicide Lager’ were consequently in evidence to create awareness about this problem in the country. There were also voluntary testing and counselling stations. The peer educators were predominantly female, and were involved in most of the programmes for the day’s events. The toolkit was well demonstrated and received, the coaches being very excited about applying it in their respective communities.

Two players from Township Rollers, the current league winners in Botswana, were also present to give motivation to the youngsters. I demonstrated a few ball skills with Edwin, one of the top players of Township Rollers. One of the coaches said that his eight-year-old son was so excited, that he asks him every day if the World Cup is finally starting! He has bought tickets for one of the games at the Royal Bafokeng Stadium, which is only an hour’s drive away. When tickets went on sale, people had to scramble for them and they were soon sold, suggesting an insufficient number available for the masses wanting to attend matches. Some people even asked me if I knew of reasonably priced accommodation in Cape Town. A gift from Namibia was handed over to SEDYEL’s directors Kito Masa and Modiri Pikashe. They received a Namibian YDF-Ball, a Namibian flag and a statue of a San bushman, as both Namibia and Botswana are home to these indigenous hunter-gathering people of southern Africa. A gift was then also handed over, to be presented after events in Lesotho, our next port of call on the tour.

Arriving in Lesotho on the evening of 8 May, we met with Kick4Life about the programme for the following day. The event got under way on 9 May: all the participants gathered at the Maseru Sport Club, sped off through the streets waving banners, then returned to the club. The teams comprised mostly boys. While the games were taking place, the youths could make use of the voluntary testing and counselling station and enjoy the ‘dunk tank’ (filled with balloons instead of water) and stations where face masks and puppets were being made. Peer educators also had ice-breaker games and other activities to keep the youngsters occupied.

Once again, the coaches were extremely excited about the toolkit and looked forward to implementing it in their communities. An imaginary football match took place without a ball. Players had names on their backs: ‘Peer Pressure’, ‘Unprotected Sex’ and ‘Condom’, among others. For their part, the assistant referee wore names ‘Culture and Policy’. One of the volunteers was used as a live radio commentator and the match was used to promote HIV/AIDS awareness. A few random draws enabled participants to win meal vouchers; other prizes included soccer balls and T-Shirts handed to individuals who answered questions correctly. The Deputy Head of the German Embassy, Mr Herbert, had come all the way from Pretoria. He congratulated Kick4Life on its good work and was thrilled with the enthusiasm shown by all. At the end of the football matches, all the participants and spectators formed a human chain in the shape of the universal red HIV/AIDS ribbon.

A gift from Botswana was handed to Peter Fleming, Director of Kick4Life. He received books on the cultural heritage of Botswana and a historical textbook, both wrapped in the Botswana national flag. A gift was then handed over for the next host, Swaziland. I gave an interview for the local radio station with the President of the Lesotho Women’s Football Association. The Radio DJ, Sebata, is the manager of the African Warriors team which plays in the 1st division, but when home, hosts a sports radio show.

Continued...
Let the strength of the youth create a strong Africa cont.

We left Lesotho on 10 May and arrived in Mbabane, Swaziland, that same afternoon. We met with Darius of the Swaziland National Sports Council about the programme. On 11 May the event started with a parade around the National Stadium in Lobamba with drum majorettes and flag-bearers brandishing a ‘Strong Youth, Strong Africa’ banner. The girls and boys were separated during the cultural events and soon it was time for the tournament to begin. The earlier rounds had been played beforehand, and only the semifinals for both the girls’ and boys’ U-15 teams took place during the programme. Vice-Chairperson of the Sports Council, Sikhatsi Dlamini, told us that while growing up, he and his peers had to make balls out of paper, and so thanked GTZ heartily for its support and the programme that was brought to Swaziland.

The winner in the girls’ section was Ngwazini Junior Ladies who beat Lobamba; the winner in the boys’ section was Siteki who emerged victorious over Ngwazini. The winners in both categories received a soccer kit for the entire team with the ‘Strong Youth, Strong Africa’ branding, training material and balls from the Sports council, and a GTZ-branded ball. They were not the only winners, however, as all the teams received balls and other training material: The teams placed fourth received a ball from the Sports Council and a GTZ-branded ball; those who came in third received a ball from the Sports Council, a GTZ-branded ball and cones; and the teams who came second were given a ball from the Sports Council, a GTZ-branded ball and training bibs branded with ‘Strong Youth, Strong Africa’.

The toolkit demonstration was one of the best given. The coaches showed great enthusiasm and were really eager to obtain more information on the toolkit. A gift from Lesotho was handed over to Sikhatsi Dlamini of the Swaziland National Sports Council. He received a traditional Basotho hat and blanket to keep him warm. A gift was then also handed over for Mozambique, and Gerald Guskowski, Project Manager of YDF, received a shield from Sikhatsi Dlamini as a symbol of protection for him.

The 2010 FIFA World Cup™ will come and go, but through GTZ and YDF, communities and countries will be uplifted and restored. Pride will have returned and the youth will have made their mark in all spheres of life. Let every person do what he or she can, wherever he or she may be, and whenever he or she sees fit. We can use football to overcome cultural boundaries, because although a team needs 11 players, they need not all come from the same country.

Let the strength of the youth make a strong Africa. Viva Africa, Viva!