

Press Release

A huge step in fighting HIV/AIDS in Lesotho

Berlin, 24/09/2011 - Today saw the opening of the Lesotho Football for Hope Centre in Maseru. With dedicated spaces for education, health and football, the facility will help Centre Host organisation Kick4Life broaden its impact and reach out to more young people in the community with its football-based programmes. The opening ceremony at the brand new facility kicked off with a 7-a-side match of local football teams of orphans and vulnerable children who have been participating in Kick4Life programmes for the past 18 months.

"We are very excited about the centre opening, not just for the great event we have lined up, but for what the centre means for Kick4Life and our programmes in Lesotho for the long-term. We are delighted that so many friends and colleagues from Lesotho and around the world can join us for this landmark day," said Steve Fleming, founder of Kick4Life.

The Kick4Life story began with a single football. 2005 Steve and his brother Pete Fleming dribbled a football all across Malawi to raise funds for hundreds of children that had become orphans as a result of AIDS. A year later the brothers founded Kick4Life. The organisation has grown into an innovative NGO, fighting HIV in Lesotho, a country which has one of the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rates and about 100,000 children orphaned by AIDS.

A streetfootballworld network member since 2005, Kick4Life was a top nominee to run one of the centres built on the African continent as part of FIFA's official World Cup legacy campaign "20 Centres for 2010". Four more centres providing infrastructure and facilities are already up and running, including three run by streetfootballworld network members in Kenya, Mali and South Africa.

"The '20 Centres for 2010' project is a huge step for Development through Football in Africa. At least ten streetfootballworld network members will receive important infrastructure to reach even more young people and have a greater impact on their communities. Every centre is as unique as its Centre Host, tailored to the local needs of the community," said streetfootballworld Network Director Vladimir Borkovic at the centre opening.

"The centre in Lesotho will provide Kick4Life with the necessary infrastructure to become a hub in their region, reaching more vulnerable

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young people in Lesotho with their programmes, and also taking responsibility as one of the leading organisations in the streetfootballworld network," he concluded.

The Lesotho Football for Hope Centre will be used to plan and implement interventions for the whole of Lesotho. It will also offer regular Test Your Team events, which seamlessly combine HIV education and testing with football tournaments, and will be a hub for the nation's culture, health and education.

Through the love of football, streetfootballworld brings individuals and organisations together behind a common goal: empowering young people to rise above their circumstances. The streetfootballworld network unites 84 organisations that use football to tackle social challenges like HIV/AIDS, crime and homelessness. streetfootballworld also drives an international coalition of private and public sector bodies to strengthen network members, who in 2010 alone reached out to over 600,000 young people worldwide.

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