

Designated as one of FIFA's and President Gianni Infantino's key goals, football development is also one of Rwanda's principal concerns, as demonstrated by the substantial project work carried out in this sphere by its national football federation, FERWAFA.

Made up of 42 bedrooms, two dining rooms, several offices and two large meeting rooms, the Rwandan Football hotel functional complex, which is still in a development phase, will be used to host the entire Amavubi – be it the men's, women's or youth teams – during national gatherings.

Davis Ndayisenga, Manager of FIFA's Regional Development Office says that it's a source of pride for the Kigali Regional Office to have supported FERWAFA in the construction of this superb building which was officially opened in Kigali almost a year ago to the day. It's a unique residential centre that will enable the Federation to embark on other projects in the future."

"The aim of this project was to reduce the FA's accommodation costs, as the sums previously spent on hotel rooms for its various teams were very high. This building solves that problem and can also be used for seminars and suchlike. Seeing the project come to fruition is fantastic for the Federation, but also for the whole region: it'll serve as an example for others, encouraging them to launch their own initiatives." He adds.

The Rwandan FA not only be able to trim its costs but will simultaneously promoting football development, as it now has suitable facilities with which to host meetings, seminars and workshops, which should, in turn, serve as levers for progress.

FERWAFA President Olivier Mugabo affirmed that Youth and senior players, men's teams, women's teams – have got a lot of people to put up ahead of matchdays or during training camps and that generates huge costs.

"The resulting budget problems sometimes forced us to do without programmes aimed at developing coaches or Technical Directors, because we didn't have enough financial resources to provide lodging for everyone. The new centre is going to help us a lot. It should play a key role in football development here." Mugabo adds.

FIFA supported the project through its successful Forward Programme, helping to complete a virtuous circle.

Upon completion, the structure will be a nest for national team Amavubi. All that remains is for Wasps to learn to fly.

FERWAFA National Director of Football Gerard Buscher also points out that the project will enable him to have all his teams available in one structure.

“As well as hosting the national squads, it will allow us to organise meetings within the framework of the Talent Development Scheme. Previously, we didn’t have the necessary facilities, and we were forced to travel all over the country. Now we’ll be able to bring all these talented players here and work with them individually.” Buscher adds.

And Rwanda is certainly not lacking in talent. Twelve years after their historic qualification for the 2011 FIFA U-17 World Cup, the country is seeing its golden generation come of age.

If the Rwandan Football Federation’s strong desire to make progress is anything to go by, another similarly gifted crop of players – on the women’s side as well as the men’s – should not take too long to emerge.

Though, the hotel project which started seven years ago has come at a cost and controversy.

In 2016, three officials former Ferwafa President Vincent de Gualle, and his former Secretary General Olivier Mulindahabi as well as consultant, Eng. Adolph Muhirwa were arrested by police for alleged malpractices linked to the tender.

While Nzamwita was cleared of any charges, Mulindahabi and Muhirwa were each handed a six-month jail term for mishandling the project.

Construction works resumed in August 2021 after FERWAFA secured US\$2.5 million from FIFA and the Royal Moroccan Football Federation (FRMF).

The first section of the hotel built by China Civil Engineering Construction Company (CCECC Rwanda Ltd) was estimated to cost US\$2.6 million. It has a ground floor and four more upper storey’s.