

Kayonza: More than 1,000 community members gathered in Rukara Sector on June 21, 2025, for the END GBV Basketball Tournament, an initiative organized by Shooting Touch Rwanda in partnership with the Kayonza District.

The event leveraged the power of sport to promote gender equality, raise health awareness, and advocate against gender-based violence (GBV).

Held at the Shooting Touch Basketball Court in Rukara, the event featured competitive 3-on-3 basketball matches with youth and women athletes from four local sectors. Champions emerged from Mukarange (U13 Youth), Rukara (U18 Boys), and Nyamirama (U18 Girls and Women's), spotlighting young talent and defying gender stereotypes in sports.

Beyond the court, the event prioritized community health, offering free noncommunicable disease (NCD) screenings to over 270 attendees in collaboration with Rukara Health Center.

Speaking at the event, Harerimana Jean Damascene, Vice Mayor of Kayonza District, praised the initiative:

“We must all work to prevent violence—we should not wait for it to happen and then react. Sports and equality go hand in hand; you cannot truly play while knowing your family is affected by violence.”

The event also featured messages from local leaders, NGO representatives, and international guests, all urging increased efforts toward gender equity and the elimination of GBV.

Empowering Women and Promoting Health

The tournament is part of Shooting Touch's broader mission to bridge gender and health gaps through sport. Rwanda's national goals aim to reduce premature mortality from NCDs by 25% by 2025, and the organization's efforts align with this and other targets, including greater participation of women in physical activity and decision-making.

Currently, 57.6% of Rwandan women engage in adequate physical activity, compared to 65.8% of men. Shooting Touch's community programs are working to close this gap by providing access, resources, and inspiration.

“Sports should not be just for men—women are also capable,” said Divine, a Shooting Touch player from Rukara. “The health and gender equality lessons I’ve learned help me prevent violence and build positive behaviors. I’ve found joy and made many friends through basketball.”

270 community members received NCD screenings

64 youth and women participated in basketball games

1,000+ people engaged in physical activity and gender equity education

Shooting Touch Rwanda has been active since 2012 and now operates in six sectors of Rwanda’s Eastern Province. The organization delivers basketball programming, public health education, and gender equity initiatives across underserved communities.