Match for Solidarity helps disabled children around the globe

UEFA and the United Nations helped to raise €605,000 for the UEFA Foundation for Children to fund humanitarian and development projects around the world.

On 21 April, UEFA and the United Nations Office at Geneva joined forces to stage the Match for Solidarity charity football match. Aside from the game, between teams captained by Ronaldinho and Luís Figo, the event included a unique global digital auction for fans and a live auction at a gala dinner held after the match. All proceeds from the match and auctions are being allocated to humanitarian and development projects.

The match, held at the Stade de Genève in glorious sunshine, proved to be extremely popular, with 23,654 fans turning up to watch Figo’s team triumph 4–3 in an almost sold-out stadium. The overriding aim of the event was to promote peace, human rights and well-being across the world through the the Sustainable Development Goals as set out by the United Nations.

“I am delighted that both fans and football legends were able to come together to raise money for good causes and help those in need,” said the UEFA president, Aleksander Čeferin. “We are in a privileged position and we must use this to help children living in challenging and difficult circumstances around the world.”

A total of €605,000 was raised and is being allocated by the UEFA Foundation for Children to humanitarian and development projects selected by a committee of representatives from UEFA, the United Nations Office in Geneva and the Fondation du Stade de Genève. The objective was to support initiatives that use sport, and football in particular, as a way to protect the rights and promote inclusion of disabled children in our societies.

“Solidarity is key to creating a fairer world for everybody,” said Michael Moller, Director-General of the United Nations Office in Geneva. “This Match proved it one more time, by bringing together stakeholders of International Geneva to help reduce inequalities – Sustainable Development Goal number 10 – and to support projects for children with mental and physical disabilities worldwide. Together, our actions can produce results and have an impact in people’s lives; we need to put aside our differences and focus on our mutual goal to create a world of opportunities.”

At local level, support is being given to an awareness campaign run by **Autisme Genève**, an association that promotes a better understanding of people living with autism and an appreciation of diversity in society. The non-profit organisation was founded in Geneva in 2007 on the initiative of parents of children with autism spectrum disorders.

At international level, the approved projects are:

**Blind soccer in Bamako** (Mali): A project run by Libre Vue since 2012 to give the visually impaired greater opportunities to play football.

**Everyone invited to the pitch!** (Argentina): Run by Asociación Civil Andar in the Moreno district of Buenos Aires for over 20 years, this project fosters the development of people living with mental disabilities through employment, sport, arts culture and health initiatives.

**Inclusive sports for peace** (Sri Lanka): This project, run by local NGOs und supervised by Handicap International, is active in the districts of Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Ampara and helps young people living with physical disabilities by ensuring sport is available to all and by promoting social cohesion.

“We are pleased that the momentum and support we received from the Match for Solidarity event has allowed us to assist programmes that improve the lives of children across four continents,” said Pascal Torres, general secretary of the UEFA Foundation for Children. “Children living with disabilities are particularly vulnerable and therefore need more support to have their basic rights respected, including access to education, sports and leisure activities.”

The UEFA Foundation for Children would like to thank everyone involved in the organisation of this fantastic event: UEFA, the United Nations Office at Geneva, the city and canton of Geneva, the Fondation du Stade de Genève, as well as the fans, players, referees and donors, and everyone else who helped make the first Match For Solidarity a great success.

For high-resolution videos and images relating to this media release, visit the [newsroom](https://uefa.newsmarket.com/football-social-responsibility/uefa-foundation-for-children).

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