



# KWEPENA AND TRADITIONAL AFRICAN GAMES REIMAGINED FOR YOUTH

## PLAY THE AFRICAN WAY

[www.kwepena.com](http://www.kwepena.com)



TAFISA

*Presented by Simon Peter Tumukunde*

TAFISA Live Webinar · 29 April 2026



# WHO WE ARE

Cheza is a youth-led organization founded in 2014, committed to reviving, evolving and globalizing Traditional African Sports through innovation and added value. We believe that African games are not just fun activities, but essential parts of our cultural identity, heritage, and community well-being. We specialize in redesigning and modernizing traditional games such as Kwepena, Omweso, Thinti, Duulu, Bladda, Amahiri, and many others into structured, inclusive, and globally recognizable 21st-century sports.

We work with schools, colleges, clubs, community groups, and organizations across Africa and beyond.

## **Mission:**

To revive and add innovation to Indigenous African sports, utilizing their untapped potential and take them to a global level.

## **Vision:**

To enhance values of Play, Unity, Development, and Health among communities, especially young people across the world through traditional African sports.

## **Our North Star:**

To Build a Player Base and Fan Base for Evolved Traditional Sports

## **Our Dream:**

To Take Kwepena to the Olympics



# OUR FLAGSHIP SPORT: KWEPENNA/CHEZADODGE



In parts of Africa, the oldest game of “dodgeball” is called Kwepena which means “dodge”. This game is one of Africa’s oldest traditional games, existing with various other names (**Kwepena – Uganda, Kati – Kenya, Ovi/Shumpu – South Africa, Butu - Namibia, Agapira – Rwanda, Maflawu – Zambia, Dandy Shandy – Jamaica, BoruBoru – South Sudan, Rede – Tanzania and many more**). The word Cheza means Play in Swahili, the combination of these two dialects, therefore led to the creation of the Cheza Association and the sport of chezadodge a modern version of this old age game.



# OUR APPROACH



Cheza works at the intersection of sport, culture, innovation, and youth empowerment. Our programming is rooted in:

- **Redesign & Adapting:** Modernizing traditional games into competitive, structured formats
- **Preservation and Documentation:** We research, document and maintain record of traditional African sports histories.
- **Training & Mentorship:** Empowering young leaders through sport education and skill-building
- **Community Engagement:** Activating play in schools, rural areas, and urban centres
- **Partnership Development:** Building national and international sport systems for traditional games
- **Global Recognition:** Working with reputable global sport organisations to position African games internationally



# CORE ACTIVITIES & INITIATIVES



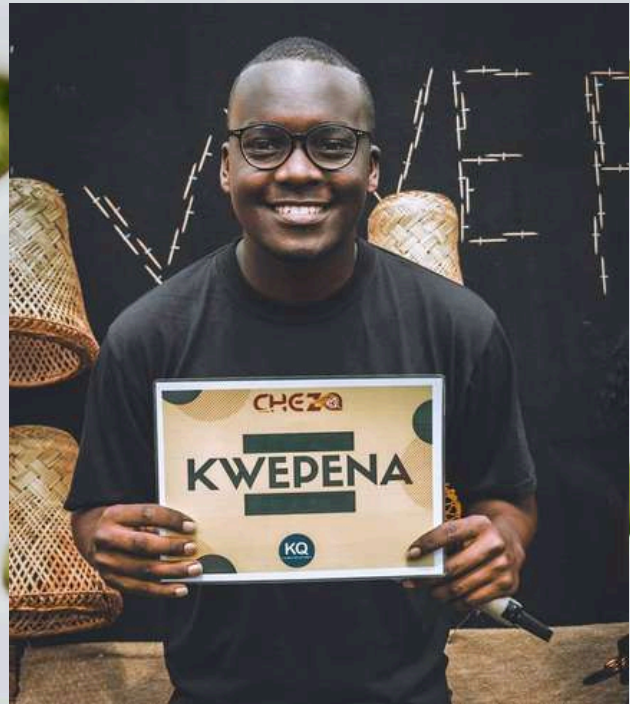
- **Kwepena Festival:** Africa's leading multi cultural celebration of traditional sports.
- **Cheza Game Days:** Immersive sport and team-building activations in schools, universities, organisations and communities.
- **Boru Boru - Championing Girls:** Advancing gender equality, peace and rehabilitation in **South Sudan** through Traditional Boru Boru (Kwepena/ChezaDodge) in partnership with Bless a Child Foundation
- **School & Community Clubs:** Promoting talent development, movement, inclusion, and cultural education in over 50 schools and 20 communities.
- **Coach Training & Certification:** Building a continent-wide team of skilled ambassadors and facilitators
- **Innovative Methodologies:** Integrated Methodologies that enrich impact e.g the **Multiple Intelligence New Approach to Effective Education (MINAE)** that integrates the 8 types of intelligences: linguistic, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, logical mathematical, naturalist, intrapersonal and interpersonal.





# Cheza Schools Moments





# Cheza Moments



Maipak PHOTO

# FROM COMMUNITY TO MOVEMENT



Cheza brings:

- **A Proven Track Record:** A growing community with successful local events & tournaments, attracting national and international attention while impacting over 700,000 young people. Active operations in: Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan. Scaling globally!
- **An Innovative and Entrepreneurial Spirit:** A dynamic and innovative organization ready to collaborate and adapt for socio-economic development.
- **Media Momentum:** Featured stories in **BBC, Al Jazeera, CGTN, RFI** showcasing the potential and historical significance of Cheza to the sporting universe and the potential it represents.
- **Resourceful Network:** Strong partnerships with institutions, organisations including Recent recognition and partnership to expand into 80 national organisations/associations through the World Dodgeball Network for the flagship sport of Chezadodge





# WHY TRADITIONAL AFRICAN GAMES MATTER

Traditional African games:

- Hold the **Native Advantage**, with millions of players and potential fans across the continent
- Hold **Evolutional Potential**: The story of the biggest sports in the world today shows a **history** of Evolution that has seen them transform over the past ages, with **accelerated innovation** in the 20th century **culminating** into the global sports eco system that impacts us in unbound ways today. It is now time, for Traditional African games to evolve.
- Are expressions of **identity, heritage, and wisdom**
- Cultivate **athleticism, leadership, creativity, and strategic thinking**
- Offer inclusive, low-cost access to sport
- Foster mental, physical, and emotional well-being
- Unite communities across generations and borders



**Thinti**  
**Icekwa**  
**Ndize**  
**Khetha**  
**Sling (Butida)**  
**Rock Sled (Gogolo)**

**WHY TRADITIONAL  
AFRICAN GAMES MATTER**

“

*Thinti was the most popular boys' game in our area. We would divide ourselves into two equal sides. Two Thinti was the most popular boys' game in our area. We would divide ourselves into two equal sides. Two sticks would be driven firmly into the ground in an upright position and at some reasonable distance apart. They served as targets.*

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— **Nelson Mandela**

*Long Walk to Freedom*

*Traditional sport did not just entertain Mandela. It shaped his character, built his conviction in collective effort, and gave him a foundation.*

THE MANDELA PRINCIPLE

COLLECTIVE EFFORT THROUGH PLAY

**Thinti  
Icekwa  
Ndize  
Khetha  
Sling (Butida)  
Rock Sled (Gogolo)**

**WHY TRADITIONAL  
AFRICAN GAMES MATTER**

“

*As I look back to those days I am inclined to believe that the type of life I led at my home, my experiences in the veld where we worked and played together in groups, introduced me at an early age to the ideas of collective effort. The little progress I made in this regard was later undermined by the type of formal education I received which tended to stress individual more than collective values. Nevertheless, in the mid 1940s when I was drawn into the political struggle, I could adjust to any difficulty, perhaps because of my early upbringing.*

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— **Nelson Mandela**

*Long Walk to Freedom*

*Traditional sport did not just entertain Mandela. It shaped his character, built his conviction in collective effort, and gave him a foundation.*

## CONTEXT

# Every Great Sport Was Once Traditional

*The sports dominating the world today followed a path African traditional sports are now beginning to walk.*

<b>Football</b>	Folk football — England, 13th century. Mob games played in villages with no standard rules. The Football Association codified it in 1863.	<b>1863 codified</b>
<b>Basketball</b>	Invented 1891 by Dr. James Naismith drawing on folk games and fitness culture. Became Olympic in 1936, now the 2nd most watched sport globally.	<b>1891 invented</b>
<b>Rugby</b>	Evolved from the same mob football tradition as soccer — divided into two codes (Union & League) through governance disputes in 1895.	<b>1823 origin</b>
<b>Judo / Martial Arts</b>	Ancient combat traditions of Japan, Korea, China — codified into Judo (1882), Taekwondo, Karate for modern competition and Olympic inclusion.	<b>Olympic 1964</b>
<b>Sepak Takraw</b>	Southeast Asian traditional game played for centuries. TAFISA pathway led to Asian Games inclusion. Now a model for how traditional games go global.	<b>Asian Games 1990</b>
<b>Kabaddi</b>	Ancient South Asian contact sport. Pro Kabaddi League (2014) transformed it into India's 2nd most watched sport. 435M viewers in Season 5.	<b>PKL 2014</b>

THE PROOF IS HAPPENING NOW

# Emerging Sports Rising from Traditional Contexts

## Kabaddi

South Asia → Global

Played in villages across India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka for 4,000+ years. Codified by the Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India. The Pro Kabaddi League launched in 2014 on the IPL model. By Season 5, it had 435 million viewers. Now played in 30+ countries with an Asian Games gold medal. This is the playbook African traditional sport can follow.

**Lesson: Federation + media deal + urban format = global sport**

## Spikeball / Roundnet

USA → 50+ Countries

Standardised rules and compact equipment in 2008. Now played competitively in 50+ countries with national federations and a world championship. Built on the same principle as traditional sport revival: take a folk game, standardise it, make it portable, and let youth

**Lesson: Portable equipment + youth culture = exponential growth**

## Sepak Takraw

Southeast Asia → Olympic Pathway

Played across Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia for centuries as a royal court game. Codified in 1960, Asian Games inclusion in 1990, now played in 30+ countries. TAFISA has been central to its international recognition. The sport retains its cultural identity while competing at the highest level. The path Kwepena is on.

**Lesson: Cultural authenticity + international federation = recognition**

*Not one road. Three distinct models for how traditional sport can grow:*

## 01

### THE SINGULAR SPORT PATH

*Creating the Next Big Sport*

- Pick the most scalable traditional game in your ecosystem
- Standardise rules, court, equipment — create a full technical code
- Build a governing body, attract international federation MoUs
- Design a professional league model — the PKL/Kabaddi approach
- Target regional games, world games, and ultimately Olympic inclusion
- This is the ChezaDodge / Kwepena path

## 02

### COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING PATH

*Traditional Sport as Social Infrastructure*

- Use traditional games as tools for health, education and social cohesion
- School curricula integration — PE, life skills, gender inclusion
- Community health and wellness activation through play
- Financial literacy, advocacy, and behavioural change wrapped in sport
- This is the Cheza GameDay, Together For Her, and schools approach

## 03

### MULTI-SPORT PRESERVATION PATH

*Building a Cultural Sports Archive*

- Document, codify, and preserve the full breadth of a nation's games
- Host multi-sport festivals — a traditional sports Olympics format
- Create cultural exchange through sport between nations and diaspora
- Drive tourism, cultural identity, and heritage investment
- This is the Kwepena Festival path — 25+ games, one platform

A group of approximately ten people, mostly young adults, are posing outdoors on a blue track. They are all smiling and making peace signs with their hands. Some are wearing yellow and black Cheza-branded clothing. One man in the center is holding a microphone. The background shows a grassy area and trees under a clear blue sky.

# Cheza Ambassadors Program

Like the Cheza Sports Network, the ambassadors program is one that brings together like minded leaders that are outgoing, energetic and passionate about Cheza/Kwepena. These people love Kwepena as much as we do, and people tend to follow their lead. The ambassadors lead the charge of change in their different communities to see the vision of Cheza achieved.

# Partnerships

We have partnered with different organizations across Africa to implement and progress our projects. These include; Coca-Cola / Fanta, SafeBoda, Goethe-Zentrum, Next Media Uganda, Uganda Museum, Reach A Hand Uganda, CACIFA, HAC South Sudan, Remnant Generation, Uganda National Cultural Centre, 4040 Foundation, Iprofile Foundation, Campus Bee, KQ Hub Africa, Fimango and many more.



# PLAY THE AFRICAN WAY

*African traditional sports are not relics.*

*They are living systems waiting for the infrastructure they deserve.*

*Cheza is building that infrastructure.*

*One sport. One school. One federation at a time.*

*"Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to unite in a way that little else does.  
It speaks to youth in a language they understand." — Nelson Mandela*

**Simon Peter Tumukunde**

Founder & President, Cheza

[www.kwepena.com](http://www.kwepena.com) · [hello@kwepena.com](mailto:hello@kwepena.com)



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**CHEZA** 



**CHEZADODGE**  

**Thank you!**

[www.kwepena.com](http://www.kwepena.com)  
[chezasport@gmail.com](mailto:chezasport@gmail.com)

Contact US  
Plot 14, Old Kampala  
Kampala, Uganda