



# Youth Outreach Partnership

## Save the Children Australia

The YOPP Sports program sits alongside the YOPP livelihood program and the YOPP DRR initiative to improve the health and livelihood opportunities of Solomon Islanders particularly women and young people. In particular, the sport program exists as a Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) initiative which specifically aims to facilitate the living of healthy lifestyles by young people in communities throughout the Solomon Islands. Alongside this health objective the project aims to enhance the ability of young men and women from target communities to plan, organise, manage and participate in youth-led inclusive sport activities. The project is part of the Australian Sports Outreach Program (ASOP), an Australian Government initiative managed by the Australian Sports Commission and funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

## Youth Outreach Partnership

### Background

Consultations with communities and key stakeholders revealed sport is a popular pastime in Solomon Islands, with community level activities on most days in most communities. From community level, to national government level, stakeholders were able to identify a number of ways in which sport had contributed to development outcomes in the past. Key themes included:

- Bringing people together
- Encouraging healthy lifestyles, through improved physical health;
- Reduction of alcohol consumption and substance abuse (e.g., marijuana), particularly by young people;
- Skill development, particularly of young people.
- Positive engagement of young people and a reduction in anti-social activities;
- Income generation, through 'cash prizes' and opportunities for small markets in conjunction with games and tournaments.

Save the Children with the Australian Sport Commission believe that the program has also been particularly useful in addressing cross-cutting issues including gender, disability and child protection that are especially pertinent in the Solomon Islands.

### Innovation

The program activities include tournaments between YOPP sites, community level sports activities, awareness sessions and advocacy, training for staff and volunteers, and links to

Youth Action Plans and provincial sports activities. The YOPP Sport program exists as the only such program run by an INGO in partnership with government and a number of sporting federations in the Solomon Islands.

### Partnerships

Staff and sports volunteers have been successful in linking sport activities with activities at both provincial and national government level. At national level, this relationship building is complicated slightly as sport sits under the Ministry of Home Affairs but sits under the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs at provincial level. However there have been a number of successes including a national Sport for Development stakeholders meeting attended by 28 participants from 14 fourteen different stakeholders including national sporting federations, government ministries and community based organisations.

### Sustainability

The YOPP Sports program uses a Strength Based Approach. By using this approach, it is envisaged the community will feel increased ownership of project activities as they will have significantly contributed through natural and physical assets, skills and network building. The Strengths Based Approach is particularly useful in, focusing on sports already existing inside communities, recognising and using existing community assets, recognising

a number of key resource people reside in communities who can contribute to the project, recognising sport has contributed to community development in the past and building on this and working towards visions for community development, as identified by community members. Whilst youth will be the target, the project works with other community members (older men and older women) to ensure there is support and recognition of youth led sport activities in the villages. The project will establish and/or strengthen community level sports committees, and provide training in areas such as fundraising.

### Impact

A manual informing the delivery and implementation of the program was only developed in the last phase (July 2013 – June 2014). The program may have been more effective had this manual been developed earlier and served as an effective guide for implementation of activities by project staff. MOU's with important stakeholders have yet to be signed, although this has not hampered implementation. The division of sport between two ministries at the national government level has made relationship building difficult. Further initiatives in the Solomon Islands should receive extensive government support.