



League Bilong Laif

National Rugby League

The Australian NRL's Rugby League in Schools Pilot Program - branded as League Bilong Laif (League for Life) is engaging a new generation of primary school students throughout PNG in rugby league. League Bilong Laif (LBL) aims to improve the quality of education for girls and boys of all abilities in PNG through rugby league and related activities and increase the capacity of teachers to conduct rugby league based activities in the school environment. It also provides opportunities for women to forge a career in the game and is introducing a whole new generation of female participants to the sport. Development officers also deliver key social messages on 'Respect' and the 'Importance of Education for all Papua New Guineans' in addition to identified school specific messages such as anti-bullying throughout the program.



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Background

LBL is a five session (non-contact and non-competitive) program that includes on field and in classroom activities and utilises a range of rugby league themed educational materials that the NRL have developed with Macmillan Education Australia such as the Rugby League Reads magazines that encourages healthy lifestyles and boosts their physical, social, literacy and math skills.

Innovation

League Bilong Laif utilise a range of rugby league themed educational resources to better engage students in and out of the classroom; provide positive social messages that are delivered throughout the program and by PNG Hunters players at the end of each term at special school assemblies and other special events throughout the year; and have a female and male development officer at each session to promote gender equality and positive role models for either sex.

Partnerships

LBL is a three-way partnership between the Australian Government - represented by the Australian Sports Commission, PNG Government - represented by the National Department of Education and the Australian Rugby League Commission - represented by the NRL. The three year pilot program (2013-2016) is funded by the Australian Government's Aid program through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The NRL employs

staff directly in PNG to deliver the program, making it a PNG led initiative to build the capacity and skills of local staff. The NRL have established a partnership with the University of PNG, where it has based its head office for PNG, as well as housing staff for the National Capital District. The NRL has an established a regional office in East New Britain and will set up further offices in Eastern Highlands and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville as it continues to expand.



Sustainability

LBL trains teachers on how to run the program and then gets them actively involved and mentors them through the five session program. Schools are left with a resource pack so teachers can continue to deliver the program and ongoing support, resources, training and follow up visits are provided by the NRL Development Officers. The program is entirely led and managed by Papua New Guineans in PNG, building local skill and capacity. The NRL works with the national federation, the Papua New Guinea Rugby Football League to build their skill and capacity with the aim to partner in the delivery of the program in the future.

Impact

Since the program commenced, over 5,000 students have completed the LBL program and 200 teachers have been trained from the 12 schools that have participated to date. 50% of program participants have been female (most having their first ever rugby league experience) and 75% of the teachers trained have also been female. As a direct result of the teacher training 100% of participants believe you can achieve educational outcomes through rugby league and 100% stated will now use rugby league activities with their classes. 89% would use both on the field and in the classroom activities. 85% of participants are more confident to run activities and 89% are now confident (compared to 60% pre course) to run rugby league activities with their classes. Female and male development officers have proved as equally as popular as each other by working side by side at each session and creating a positive environment. Teachers want to use rugby league to better engage students in the school environment but don't have the appropriate training to do so. This is shown by 88% of teachers receiving first ever training in rugby league (100% for females) and 84% wanting to receive training. 100% of teacher training participants would recommend the course to other teachers. The plan is for the program to imbedded into the PNG curriculum and be funded past 2016.