



Smash Down Barriers

Table Tennis Australia

The Pacific Sports Partnership “Smash Down Barriers” Oceania Table Tennis Disability Program is a joint initiative of Table Tennis Australia and Oceania Table Tennis Federation. Funding has been provided through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade’s Australian Aid program. The program is designed to strengthen the infrastructure of the targeted Pacific Table Tennis Federations (PTTF) so that they can establish, deliver & expand participation based table tennis programs in special schools, local disability community groups and rehabilitation centres which will contribute in the long term to improving the lives of people with disability (PWD).

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Background

The PSP Smash Down Barriers Oceania Table Tennis Disability Program began in the first quarter of 2014 in Vanuatu. The initial visit was successful in forming a Memorandum of Understanding with the Vanuatu Table Tennis Federation, which will receive PWD-friendly equipment and support to run table tennis activities. Similarly, links with National Disability Partners were established and participation-based activities were conducted with the Vanuatu Society for Disabled People and the Rainbow Group of the Wan Smol Bag organisation. In this initial visit, baseline data on VTTF's organisational capacity and governance was collected. Furthermore, a Child & Youth Protection Policy and an Inclusion Policy were developed with assistance from the OPDO. Additionally, job descriptions were developed to appoint a National Development Coordinator and National Development Officers who will continue to carry out the PSP Smash Down Barriers Program.

Two coaching courses were conducted with sport development officers from the Nabanga program from the Vanuatu Department for Youth Development. This course was conducted by Christian Holtz, the Oceania Para Development Officer and Anolyn Lulu the newly appointed National Development Coordinator. This course focused on

creating and implementing table tennis disability programs in communities around Vanuatu. This initial visit to Vanuatu revealed a number of challenges including lack of accessible transport and inaccessible public facilities and sporting facilities.

Partnerships

In order to achieve the desired outcomes of the program Table Tennis Australia has employed an Oceania Para Table Tennis Development Officer (OPDO) who will spend 6 weeks per year in each of the 4 targeted countries; namely Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Kiribati. During these visits the development officer will be responsible for establishing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the targeted Pacific Table Tennis Federations. People with disabilities will be encouraged to be actively involved in all areas of the Pacific Table Tennis Federation's activities including participation programs, competitions, education and administration. Equipment will be provided to the 4 targeted countries including 10 wheelchair friendly table tennis tables, 100 rackets and 3000 balls.

Sustainability

The OPDO will initiate discussions between the targeted PTTF's and the National Paralympic Committees (NPC) with the aim of the PTTF becoming affiliated with their relevant NPC. Further talks will be initiated by the OPDO

between the PTTF's and the National Disability Partners (NDP) within the relevant country with a view of establishing MOU's between the two. With assistance from the OPDO, the targeted PTTF's would then seek input from the NPC and the NDP's to develop a Child Protection Policy and a National Inclusion Policy for table tennis.



Impact

The PSP Smash Down Barriers Oceania Table Tennis Disability Program began in the first quarter of 2014 in Vanuatu. The initial visit was successful in forming a Memorandum of Understanding with the Vanuatu Table Tennis Federation, which will receive PWD-friendly equipment and support to run table tennis activities. Similarly, links with National Disability Partners were established and participation-based activities were conducted with the Vanuatu Society for Disabled People and the Rainbow Group of the Wan Smol Bag organisation. In this initial visit, baseline data on VTTF's organisational capacity and governance was collected.