

International Study Seminar of the Church and Sport Section: “Coaches: educating people”.

Coaches: A mission toward social inclusion

The Future in Youth sport program, Timor-Leste: The education of coaches for the development of community.

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The Future in Youth sport program

The Future in Youth (FIY) sport program is conducted in Baucau -Timor Leste and is focused on the education and empowerment of our coaches that we hope leads to the support, development and growth of social inclusion in their community.

FIY is a capacity building program which uses sport to help build health, wellbeing and life skills for the people of Baucau in Timor Leste. FIY engages and educates volunteer coaches, to promote key messages of health, wellbeing and life skills through sport.

There are two key components to the FIY program, coach education for volunteers in the community and sport education program for youth. Over the past 5 years approximately 4500 youth and 250 volunteer coaches have participated in the FIY program.

Timor Leste

Australia is one of Timor Leste’s closest neighbours and has worked alongside the Timorese people since withdrawal of Indonesia in 1999. Timor Leste, gained independence in 2002. During their struggle for independence most of the country’s infrastructure was destroyed. This included the destruction of 95% of its schools. Timor Leste has a very large population of young people with 53% of its population under the age of 18. It is a developing nation with 37% of its population living below the poverty line. The education of its people has been severely disrupted during the many years of occupation leading to an illiteracy rate of 50% of the population. Life expectancy at birth is 62.5 years and 40% of the population is malnourished (UNDP, 2013).

Opportunities to engage youth

The Australian Catholic University (ACU) first ran the FIY program in 2010. The university was approached, through the Salesian Brothers of Baucau in Timor Leste, to see if we could offer assistance to their village who were having problems with outbreaks of violence between youth gangs in their community. Many of the youth of Baucau, at the time, were not engaged in full time school life, there were also high levels of youth unemployment and very few opportunities for youth to participate in other sporting or recreational activities.

Participation in a sport program was identified as a way of engaging the youth in alternative activities to martial arts gangs and violence. Football was chosen as the sport that would have the

highest engagement from the community as it is the most widely supported and played sport in Timor Leste.

The education and training of volunteers from the community to help deliver the program was considered vital to the program's success. The training of coaches enabled the engagement of wide range of community members and is a fundamental component of capacity building within the community.

Health, Wellbeing and Life skills

The FIY program promotes aspects of health, wellbeing and life skills for all participants and coaches through the education, development and reinforcement of 3 core principles of 'fun', 'fair' and 'respect' which underpin the program. These underpinning principles act as a code of behaviour on-field for coaches and youth with the intention that they be transferred off-field into their lives in the community.

Coach Training

Training programs for the volunteer coaches include 3- 5 day programs run by the ACU exercise science staff and students.

The coaching program includes the following areas:

1. Personal leadership development
2. Group management skills
3. Skills and Drills
4. Skill progressions and minor games
5. How to organise and run a training program
6. Teaching and demonstration Skills
7. Personal presentation Skills
8. Refereeing
9. Warm up drills
10. Tournament organisation and implementation
11. Demonstrating and encouraging codes of behaviour 'fun', 'fair' and 'respect'

We do not teach them how to play football; they are already exceptionally talented at football!

Coaching sessions include discussions based on the importance of the coaches' role in ensuring the values of fair play and the importance of the children having fun. Coaches are given examples of different ways this could be demonstrated and achieved with their teams.

The coaches are asked to agree to a code of conduct. The code of conduct supports and encourages the principles of 'Fun', 'Fair', and 'Respect'.

CODES OF BEHAVIOUR FOR COACHES

I agree to -

Help children ENJOY the game

Reward children for their EFFORT to achieve

Ensure the game is played fairly and by the rules

Give everyone an EQUAL chance to join in

Coaches are also recognised formally for their contribution to the program and presented with certificates of participation and appreciation and reimbursed for their travel costs.

In 2014 in response to community feedback the coaches training program was conducted by FIFA. This was a five day program run by an accredited FIFA coach. FIY worked with the East Timor Football Federation to successfully organise and implement this course. The successful obtainment and delivery of the FIFA course was a significant event for the community of Baucau.

Program evaluation

At the completion of each program the coaches and community members have been asked to give feedback on the FIY program, through questionnaires and debriefing sessions. In 2013 and 2014 a formal research project was undertaken to try and ascertain whether the FIY was achieving identified programs goals and to try gain and a better understanding of the community's perception of the program to help guide and direct future programs. Community leaders and coaches involved with the program shared their views regarding the program and its impacts. Data was gathered through interviews and focus groups at the completion of the three-week program and three months later. Overall findings from the collection of data from across all years demonstrated four key emergent themes. Coach's expressed that participating in FIY:

- Enriched their experience to become a better coach
- Increased their capacity to teach children to play football
- Increased their leadership capacity
- Increased their skills that can be shared in the community

Coaches' comments that illustrate this include the following:

"Through football games we would know one another better and be friends. Regardless of where one is from, football games unite us all" FIY coach 5

"Children are the important seeds of Timor Leste, even in football" FIY coach 1

"I look forward to voluntarily applying what I have learned; I feel the need to share the experiences I have to others, for good." FIY coach 6

"To play with joy, love and respect. We will use whatever we have learned to promote love, justice and respect" FIY Coach 2

"I want to apply what I have learned to bring happiness to my community, to orient my community to a better future, that is what everyone in the community wants" FIY coach 7

"I shall use these skills to create tranquility, peace and stability in the society" FIY coach 4

"I want to apply what I have learned to bring happiness to my community" FIY coach 3

"The experience of FIY so far is that the training and development of our coaches is the cornerstone of the development of the people of their communities" FIY coach 8

FIY: A mission toward social inclusion

A socially inclusive society maybe defined as one where all people feel valued, their differences are respected, and their basic needs are met so they can live in dignity (Cappo 2002).

We hope that FIY, through the education of our coaches and the contribution of our sports program, contributes to the continued growth of social inclusion for the community of Baucau.

References

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