

Oceania National Olympic Committee

Oceania Sports Education Program Case Study – FIBA in Oceania

Introduction

In the past twelve months, Basketball Fiji (BF) has grown in terms of governance and development capacity, participation and organizational base, and strengthened a number of key stakeholder relationships in the process. The following document outlines a brief summary of what they went through, the challenges they faced, and the outcomes that were achieved. It does so through investigating the support provided by FIBA in Oceania, ONOC and OSEP, as well as other key partnerships.

Readiness Assessment Tool (RAT)

At the beginning of 2014, BF used the RAT to identify the key strengths and weaknesses of their organisation. What became clear immediately was that BF rated quite low in a number of areas on the governance pillar and highly in activities. In particular, their constitution was outdated, they did not have a number of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in place, audited accounts nor did they have a formalised strategic plan.

Whilst BF did have an active board, more than half of the members were temporary or “acting”. Staff members consisted solely of the National Basketball Development Officer who had a few volunteers to call upon if necessary and the support of the association but otherwise was the lone staff member of BF. The need for more staff and change in their day to day operational structure was identified. With strong leadership by Major General Naivalurua, current president of BF, and a dedicated National Basketball Development Officer supported by a unified association the participation numbers and competition calendar had increased drastically but the organisation had yet to put the structures in place to cope with the increasing demand. The RAT made this obvious to BF. There were many challenges ahead but solutions had to be found.

Engaging an external consultant

FIBA in Oceania and Basketball Fiji both realised early that the federation could not be expected to address the issues identified by the RAT on their own. They did not cease activity at any point during this period with meant they had competing priorities in particular with the FIBA Oceania U19 Tournament at the end of the year. It is for this reason that an external consultant from Kiliati Consultancy, Mr. Talemo Waqa, was engaged to assist.

Talemo worked directly with BF to address the gaps identified when completing the RAT. The first thing they did was sit down in a workshop setting to evaluate BF’s present position (number of players, associations, funding sources, competitions) and outline some long term goals for the federation. From that, they were able to develop a three-year strategic plan.

The strategic plan in turn influenced the amending of the old constitution. With long term goals in mind, BF was able to update their constitution to current best practice standards whilst also ensuring that it met the needs of their federation as it currently stood. FIBA were able to provide support through this process by giving feedback and having their legal team look through the document to ensure its legality and consistency with other basketball federations.

Kiliati Consultancy also provided BF with support in drafting Standard Operating Procedures such as a Financial Operations Policy and a Governance Procedures Manual. These



policies were identified as steps toward achieving the goals outlined in BF's new strategic plan.

The expertise provided by engaging a consultant meant that BF was able to vocalise where they wanted to be as an organisation in three years, and Talemó was able to formalise that in draft policies. BF could then take those policies to the board for their feedback and approval. His experience in these matters meant that BF was able to have a significant amount of input without the time consuming task of putting it altogether.

Talemó's consultancy would not have been effective, however, without champions in both FIBA and Basketball Fiji following up the projects. It was fortunate that BF has Mr. Laisiasa Puamau who diligently followed up with Talemó the entire process and ensured that both FIBA and the BF board was kept informed. Similarly, BF also had an Australian Volunteer, Ms Catherine Grawich, to work closely with Talemó on a lot of the administration tasks. Hiring an external consultant was important to achieving the goals BF set to achieve, but there could be no short cuts. BF was fortunate in that they had a president driving progress and change within the federation, they had support from the regional body, and they had employees skilled and dedicated to working with the external consultant and to the task at hand.

Partnerships

The importance of the regional sporting body working with the NF cannot be understated in this case study. Whilst the majority of the work was done by BF and the external consultancy company, FIBA constantly provided support to the federation and connected BF with regional level partners. They were able to connect directly with ONOC at a regional level which resulted directly in technical assistance from OSEP and the contract with the affiliated Kiliati Consultancy.

At a national level, BF worked closely with FASANOC to secure funding assistance to pay for the services of the external consultant and also to provide a venue for workshopping events.

One of the outcomes of all of this stakeholder relationship development was a stronger relationship between FIBA in Oceania and OSEP. FIBA engaged directly with OSEP to develop a basketball specific curriculum at the start of this year that drew from both the FIBA Level 0 Coaches Course and the OSEP Community Coach Course. The course teaches the fundamental skills of basketball and how to communicate effectively as a coach with a competency based assessment system. Furthermore, FIBA in partnership with OSEP and Kiliati Consultancy ran a MiSO course in Nadi for NFs from Vanuatu, Fiji, Kiribati and the Solomon Islands which focused on good governance and management procedures.

Conclusion

- Challenges are there but you have to find solutions
- Key individuals with right skills
- Partnerships
- External consultants
- Can't take short cuts, be aware, make plans and provisions for funding resources
- NOCs and OSEP to help

