

From Well Meaning to Well Equipped in Multicultural WA Sport

Perth African Nations Sporting Association



Overview

Community Support Visits and new initiatives

- Taking on this unprecedented pilot program, we opted for a small scale and narrow focus.
- PANSA Peer Leaders team of African-background sport and recreation officials proudly delivered our volunteer program to the WA African sport community.
- Our Community Support Visits Program was tailored to provide volunteer-focused themes to achieve project outcomes.



Attending Community Sport Groups

Community Support Visits Program

With 31 known informal sport and recreation groups of African background active in Perth metro operating without support we sought to map and support these groups volunteering situation through this project; engaging 12. One community group withdrew after expressing interest.

Burundi
community

United
Maylands
JFC

Nigerian
group

Cameroon
community

Afghan
group

Kenya group

Swaziland
group

Congolese
group

Togo group

South Sudan
community

Zambia
community

South Africa
group



Community Support Visits

Why we embarked on this project

PANSA was established by the African community in WA to make a positive difference for people establishing their lives here, especially with influencing recent arrivals to settle safely and comfortably with the familiarity that sport brings in bonding and uniting people of all cultures and backgrounds anywhere in the world.

Responding to regular feedback from volunteers that they faced considerable struggles which affected their enjoyment of altruistic service and ability to help their community and significant churn, we embarked on a project to map, understand the issues faced and start to make positive change.



Community Support Visits

What we did

- **We researched:** Volunteering best practice, approaches to supporting, benefits of volunteering, gaps and barriers to mainstream volunteering
- **We attended:** Mental health training, internal organisation training including speaking to an audience, 30 activations for African sport groups where we committed strongly to gain trust and deliver sessions with volunteer themes, plus mental health and other relevant topics.
- **We ran an event:** Which was volunteer-intensive and recruited through this program which saw people step up and be treated as highly valued owners of the event; Make Smoking History Perth African Nations Cup. This event also allowed us to engage with groups who rarely or only seasonally gathered.
- **We delivered fora:** with 6 Community Volunteers and Leaders sessions rolled out for the first time, with discussions around volunteer matters, strategies for recruitment and Q&A related to volunteering and group activities.
- **We started new initiatives:** including a once-weekly administration support slot for volunteers struggling to navigate governance, administration, finance, legal and other matters, brought groups under our umbrella for insurance to cover their activities, and provided a people assistance program with free counselling support for volunteers and those around them.
- **We planned new resources:** An analysis of the findings of this program to be shared with stakeholders in June 2025.



Community Support Visits

Case Study – Burundi Community

We mapped the volunteering rates and identified factors preventing more people from volunteering. We found early on that some simple measures could add value to and simplify the volunteer's activities. Responding to the identified challenges, we:

1. We initiated a new administration support program for volunteers and Burundi's coordinator was the first test.
2. Attended more sessions and delivered tailored messages around the benefits of volunteering and recognition of the officials and their efforts
3. Provided required training equipment through our relationship with Fair Game
4. Included the coordinator in our Community Volunteers and Leaders Information Sessions, attending multiple sessions
5. By good fortune, the group also won two monthly sport equipment voucher draws in the program
6. Identified a suitable venue for their community's annual commemoration and facilitated the access with public liability insurance cover and using our networks

Community Support Visits

Case Study – Burundi Community



Community Support Visits

What we found

- Working with the community groups required much more lead-in work than anticipated because groups who had never been expected a free service understandably formed suspicion before engaging fully with us.
- Many of the same factors of gaps and barriers unite all of the groups
- After a while and with meaningful engagement actions initiated by our team, the groups became appreciative of the service and effort and opened up to our team
- National Volunteer Week which intersected with the week of the annual Africa Day commemoration, provide a perfect stage for the program finale and groups were eager to be involved and open their doors to other volunteers from around the community and share a culturally appropriate snack



Community Support Visits

Value Adds

As the project rolled out, our team conferred regularly and found new simple ways to provide support; including:

- A once-weekly administration support slot for volunteers struggling to navigate governance, administration, finance, legal and other matters
- Facilitating access to a free sport equipment program, reducing reliance on many volunteers reaching into their own pockets to get equipment
- Brought participating groups under our umbrella for insurance to cover their activities; and
- Provided a people assistance program with free counselling support for volunteers and those around them.

Our team is very proud of these initiatives!



Findings at Program's End

What we were told



Volunteer Team Growth

Delivering the right messages to the right people: Our engaged communities reported a 30% increase in community volunteers in the last 12 months



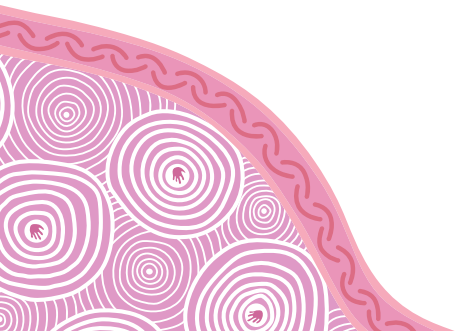
Appropriateness of Activities

Shaping our approach to fit: engaged communities reported that 60% of activities are culturally accessible in the last 12 months



Expanded volunteering

Energising and rejuvenating: engaged communities reported more than 25% increase in volunteering by existing volunteers



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