Rugby World Cup 2011 played a significant role in promoting the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) after the International Rugby Board and its humanitarian partner extended the successful Tackle Hunger campaign throughout the Tournament. Launched in 2003 at the Rugby World Cup in Australia, the Tackle Hunger campaign was born out of a desire by the IRB to help meet its social responsibility obligations and to help the United Nations in its challenge of meeting the eight UN Millennium Development Goals.

The campaign has as its main objectives to raise awareness of WFP, draw attention to the plight of the world’s hungry and connect the global Rugby community with the programme. Rugby’s showcase event has played a significant role in achieving these objectives and RWC 2011 in New Zealand broke new ground in helping get the campaign message across to a potential audience of billions.

RWC 2011 activation helped achieve the campaign’s objectives through a combination of in-stadium visibility (pitch-side boards, match-day programme adverts and a public service video), RWC fanzones, an increased online presence and via Tournament broadcasters, with an estimated cumulative global audience of over four billion people.

The campaign also used a variety of social media platforms to connect directly with Rugby fans across the world – a release regarding the WFP’s response to the famine in East Africa was also sent to over 1.2 million Rugby World Cup Facebook followers and 46,000 Twitter followers.

IRB Chairman Bernard Lapasset said: “We all have a part to play in helping the UN achieve the Millennium Development Goals and the Tackle Hunger campaign, with the support of Rugby fans around the world, can contribute in some way to alleviating the plight of those less fortunate than ourselves and have a real and positive impact on the lives of so many where hunger is present.”

Josette Sheeran, Executive Director of WFP, said: “People think that solving hunger is an insurmountable task, but every time someone learns about WFP, visits the IRB or WFP sites, and donates to help feed a hungry school child, we are building a momentum to defeat hunger, end malnutrition and help save a generation of young people that otherwise might be doomed to a diminished tomorrow.”

To find out more about the Tackle Hunger campaign visit www.wfp.org/donate/tacklehunger

First RWC for Keep Rugby Clean

Rugby World Cup 2011 broke new ground when players, Management, match officials and Tournament Organisers united to show their support for the IRB’s Anti-Doping education programme.

Sunday, September 25 was designated Keep Rugby Clean Day and teams wore specially branded t-shirts with the messages “Tackle Doping” and “Keep Rugby Clean” emblazoned on them to promote the campaign. Ball boys and girls also wore the t-shirts along with the match officials, who sported the t-shirts for their warm-ups.

Keep Rugby Clean is the Game’s leading Anti-Doping educational programme and has played a central role in the fight against drugs cheats in Rugby since its launch in 2005, with over 6,000 of the world’s top players having participated in the interactive sessions run by the IRB at its Tournaments around the world.

The campaigns have proven highly successful in educating players about the dangers of doping through a combination of a free-to-use interactive website and hands-on workshops.
Rugby’s strong record on anti-doping continued in 2011 with another record testing programme and the extension of resources designed to raise awareness and understanding among players, coaches, physicians and administrators at all levels of the Game. Alongside the continued growth of the Keep Rugby Clean website, a new IRB Anti-Doping Handbook is now available. For more details visit www.keeprugbyclean.com

- 40% increase in traffic to the trilingual Keep Rugby Clean website in 2011 – a total of 21,180 hits

- Argentina Rugby player appointed to WADA Athlete Committee

  Felipe Contepomi is the first Rugby player to be appointed to the World Anti-Doping Agency Athlete Committee since its inception. Contepomi has been an ambassador for the IRB’s Keep Rugby Clean programme for the past four years and his appointment showcases Rugby’s commitment to drug free sport. Contepomi said: “I’m excited about being part of the WADA Athlete Committee, whose main objective is to keep sport clean. As a current professional athlete sport provides many unique moments in life. Let us make sure these special moments can be achieved by talented, honourable and clean athletes who make a huge sacrifice to their sport and in turn offer inspiration to all as role models to society.”

- 500 more tests were conducted by the IRB in 2011 compared to 2010