

# TOOLKIT FOR A SPORTS ECOSYSTEM WITH A GENDER PERSPECTIVE



International  
Olympic  
Committee

Advancing  
**OLYMPISM 365**

UN WOMEN  
FOR ALL  
WOMEN  
AND GIRLS

# PREFACE

Sport has the power to inspire, unite and transform lives. It is a universal language that transcends borders and cultures and, when harnessed with intention, it can be a powerful driver of gender equality and social inclusion. Yet, around the world, women and girls continue to face unequal access to opportunities in and through sport – as athletes, coaches, leaders and decision-makers.

At the intersection of gender equality and the global sports movement lies a unique opportunity to accelerate progress towards the **Sustainable Development Goals**, particularly SDG 5 on gender equality. The UN Women International Olympic Committee (IOC) Bridging Project was launched to harness this potential by strengthening institutional frameworks and creating inclusive, equitable environments that empower women and girls in and through sport.

Developed through a collaborative process between UN Women and the IOC, this toolkit – “*A Sports Ecosystem with a Gender Perspective*” – builds on the foundational work of the *Guidelines for Gender-Responsive Sports Organizations* and aligns with the principles of the **Sports for Generation Equality Framework** and **Olympic Agenda 2020+5**. It is a practical resource designed to support sports organisations, institutions and stakeholders in embedding gender equality across all levels of sport. It reflects a shared commitment to advancing gender equality in and through sport, and to ensuring that sports environments are inclusive, safe and empowering for all.

This toolkit offers a roadmap for stakeholders across the sports ecosystem – from National Olympic Committees to grassroots organisations – to embed gender equality at the heart of their strategies, policies and operations. Drawing on global best practices, evidence-based tools and the lived experiences of women in sport, it provides actionable guidance, case studies and implementation strategies to support organisations in transforming their structures, policies and practices.

We hope this resource will serve as a catalyst for change, encouraging reflection, dialogue and action toward a more gender-equal sporting world. We thank our partners and contributors and the champions who continue to challenge the status quo. Together, we are building a sporting world that reflects the values of fairness, inclusion and dignity for all.

## Original Concept and Development:

Guidelines for Gender-Responsive Sports Organizations (2021)

---

This publication builds on the Guidelines for Gender-Responsive Sports Organizations (2021), originally developed by the UN Women Türkiye Office. The lead author was Canan Koca, with co-authorship by Rosa Lopez de D'Amico.

The guidelines were created within the HeForShe Türkiye – Fenerbahçe Sports Club partnership, with the support of Tüpraş, and are aligned with the objectives of UN Women's Generation Equality campaign – Realizing Women's Rights for an Equal Future.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official positions of UN Women, the United Nations, the IOC or any affiliated organisations.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This toolkit was produced within the framework of the UN Women–IOC Bridging Project, a joint initiative aimed at strengthening institutional frameworks and promoting gender equality in and through sport.

It reflects the collaborative work of UN Women and the IOC, with valuable contributions from a wide network of experts, practitioners and advocates committed to building a more inclusive sporting ecosystem.

UN Women gratefully acknowledges the leadership and support of the IOC, particularly the contributions of the Olympism365 and Gender Equality and Inclusion teams. We also extend our sincere appreciation to the UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, along with the Brazil and Argentina Country Offices, for their coordination and technical guidance.

Our thanks go to the sports organisations, gender experts, civil society stakeholders and government representatives who contributed their knowledge and time to this work. Above all, we recognise the voices of women athletes, coaches and leaders whose lived experiences continue to shape and inspire the pursuit of gender equality in sport.



Special thanks go to:

**Melody Johnston**, Knowledge Management Consultant (UN Women RO Asia & Pacific)  
**Hala Makhlouf**, Creative Advocacy Designer (UN Women RO Asia & Pacific)  
**Barbara Gomes Pires**, Knowledge Management Consultant (UN Women Brazil)  
**Sabrina Frydman**, Knowledge Management Consultant (UN Women Argentina)  
**Olga Bagatini**, Advocacy and Partnerships Consultant (UN Women Brazil)  
**Pedro Nogueira**, Communications Analyst (UN Women Brazil)  
**Barbara Miranda**, Graphic Design National Consultant (UN Women Brazil)  
**Debora Albu**, Project Manager (UN Women Brazil)  
**Lisa Solmirano**, Project Manager (UN Women Argentina)  
**Emad Karim**, Advocacy and Campaign Coordinator (UN Women RO Asia & Pacific)  
**Barbara Schweizer**, Olympism365 Senior Manager (IOC)  
**Pedro Dias**, Gender Equality and Inclusion Manager (IOC)  
**Tine Vertommen**, External Consultant for Safe Sport (IOC)

We also wish to acknowledge the valuable insights and feedback from colleagues at the IOC, which helped ensure this toolkit is closely aligned with key institutional frameworks – including the *Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance*, the *IOC Portrayal Guidelines* and the “Safe Sport” approach.

The voices of women athletes, coaches and leaders are central to this work. Their lived experiences not only inform its content but continue to inspire progress towards a more inclusive future in sport.

This publication stands as a testament to the power of partnership and shared vision, and to the conviction that gender equality in and through sport is not only possible, but essential.



# CONTENTS

## 1 WHY GENDER EQUALITY IN AND THROUGH SPORT?

p.5

1. Social Cohesion and Community Development
2. Economic Opportunities and Empowerment
3. Educational Benefits
4. Enhanced Mental Health and Confidence
5. Health and Well-being Across Life
6. Cultural Change and Global Development

## 2 SPORT FOR GENERATION EQUALITY PRINCIPLES

p.12



## 3 RESOURCES

p.41



# WHY GENDER EQUALITY IN AND THROUGH SPORT?



## 1 SOCIAL COHESION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### **Breaking Down Stereotypes:**

Involvement in sport can help challenge and change gender stereotypes and norms by showcasing the capabilities and achievements of women athletes, thus promoting a more inclusive and equitable society.

### **Community and Social Bonds:**

Sport creates a sense of community and belonging, fostering teamwork and cooperation. This is crucial for women and girls, providing them with networks that can support them both within and outside the sporting world.

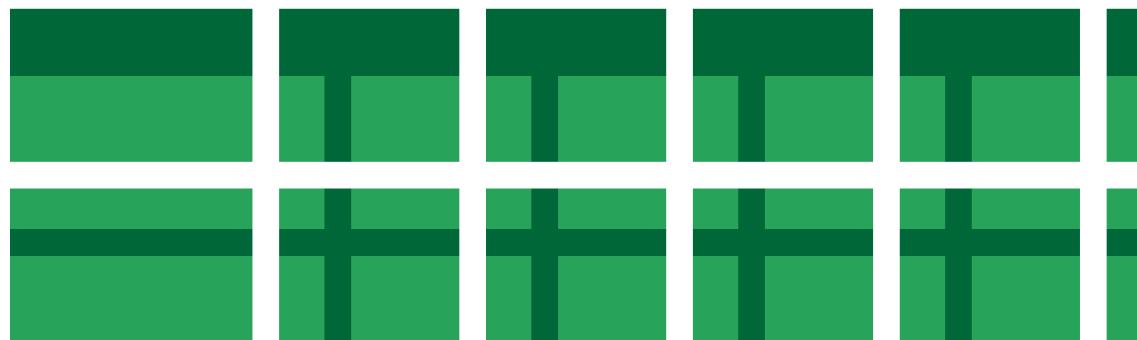
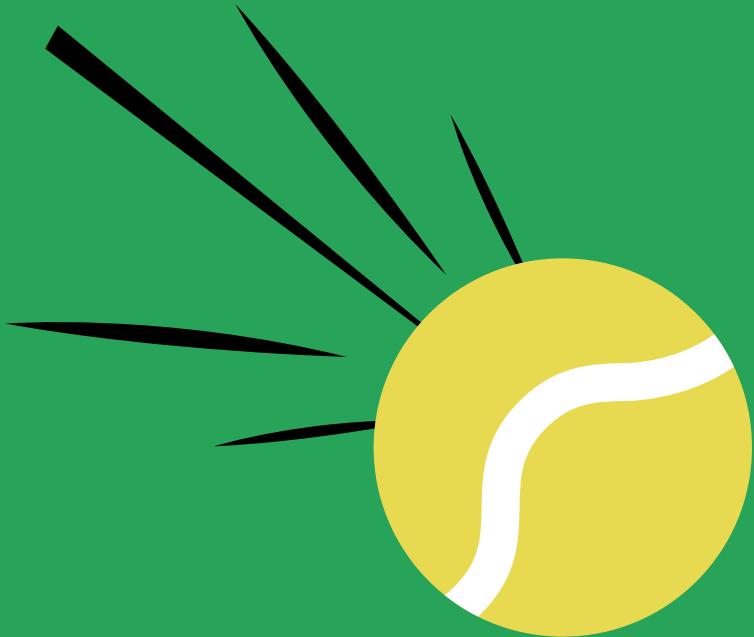
## 2 ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES AND EMPOWERMENT

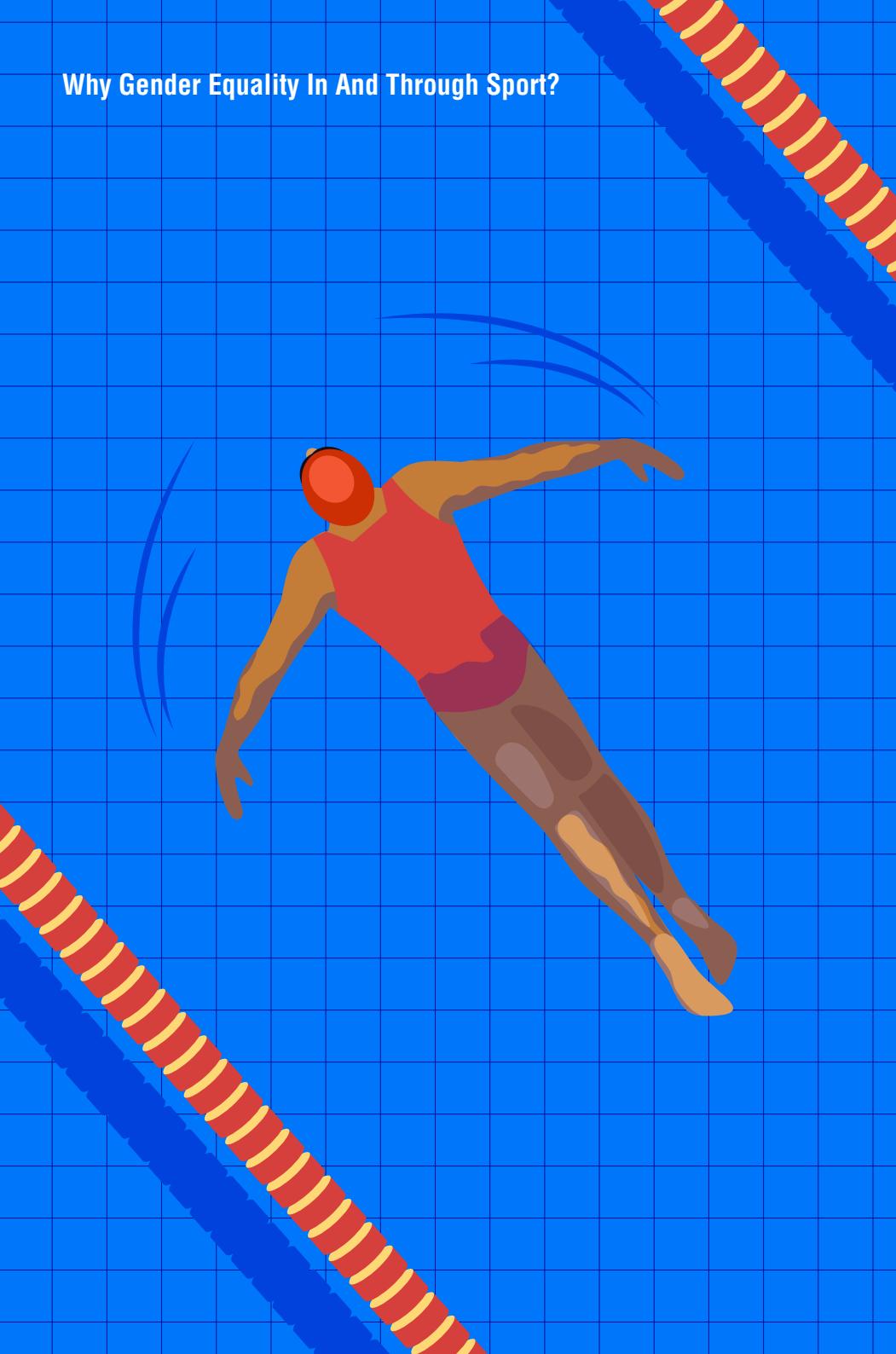
### **Career Opportunities:**

Gender equality in sport opens up more opportunities for women, not just as athletes but also in careers such as coaching, sports administration, sports science, sports medicine and sports journalism. This diversification can help narrow the gender pay gap in the sports industry and beyond.

### **Empowerment Through Financial Independence:**

Participation in sport at any level can enhance the economic status of women by providing them with opportunities for scholarships, sponsorship and professional growth. This financial independence is key to empowering women in various aspects of their lives.





## 3 EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

---

### **Improved Academic Performance:**

Participation in sport is often linked to higher academic achievement. It helps develop skills such as discipline, time management and a strong work ethic, which contribute to academic success.

### **Life Skills Development:**

Sport teaches important life skills such as leadership, teamwork, problem-solving and communication. For girls, these skills are especially valuable as they navigate the challenges of growing up and pursuing careers in fields traditionally led by men.

---

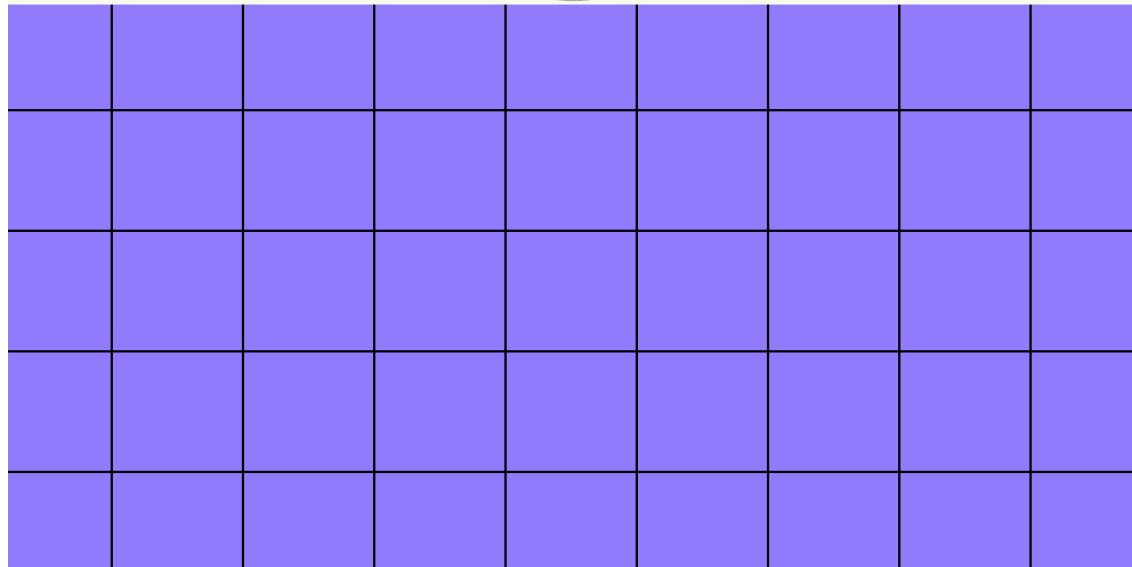
## 4 ENHANCED MENTAL HEALTH AND CONFIDENCE

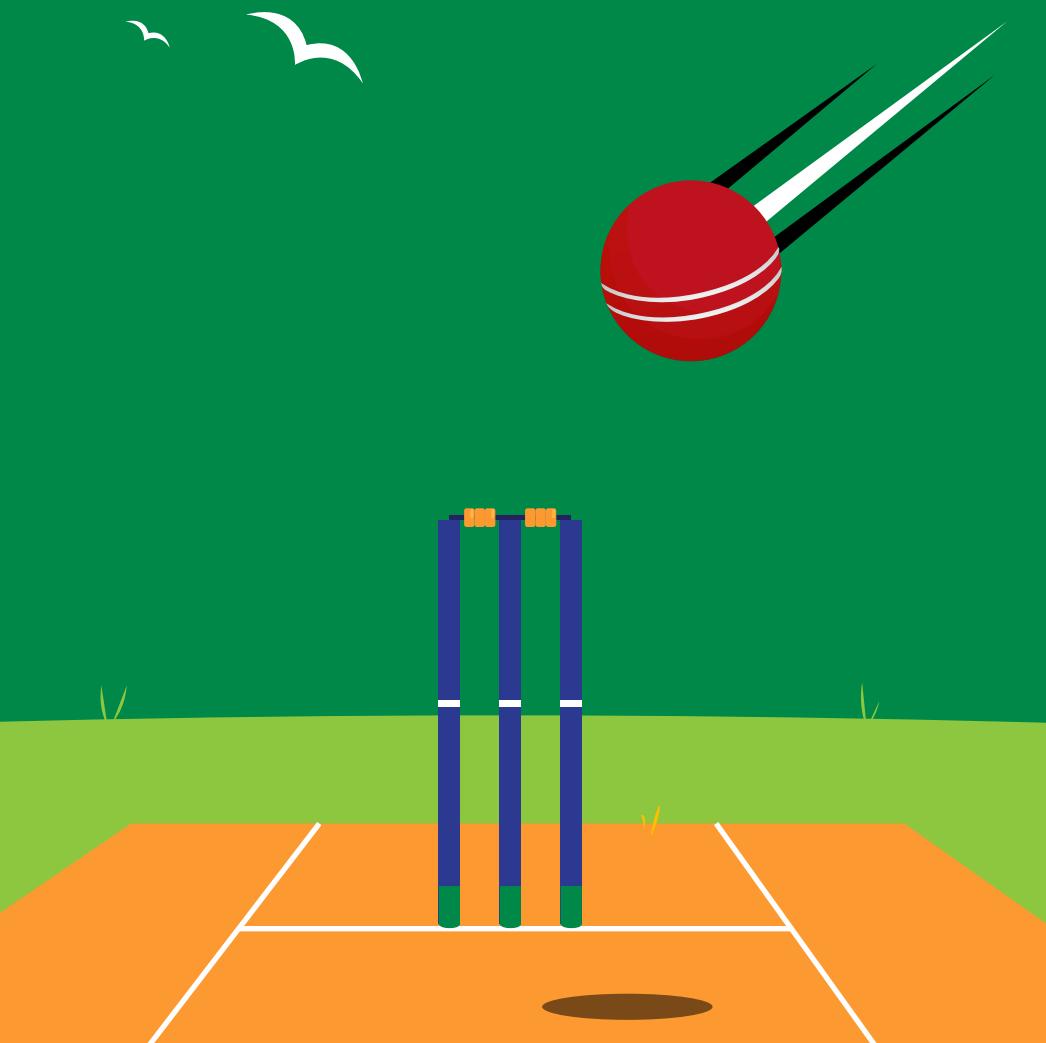
### **Mental Health Benefits:**

Engaging in sport has been shown to reduce symptoms of depression, anxiety and psychological stress, offering a significant mental health boost for both women and men. For women, who historically have had limited access to sport, the mental health benefits are even more pronounced, as participation can foster a sense of belonging and community.

### **Boost in Confidence and Self-esteem:**

Participation in sport helps build confidence, self-esteem and self-efficacy among women and girls. It challenges them to set goals, take risks and push their limits, fostering a strong belief in their ability to succeed. This, in turn, translates into other areas of their lives, empowering them to take on leadership roles and make autonomous decisions.





## 5 HEALTH AND WELL-BEING ACROSS LIFE

---

### **Long-term Health Benefits:**

Regular physical activity is associated with a decreased risk of chronic and noncommunicable diseases such as heart disease, diabetes and cancer. For women, engaging in sport can also help prevent specific health concerns, including osteoporosis, breast cancer and type 2 diabetes.

### **Positive Body Image:**

Sports participation promotes a positive body image among women and girls by focusing on what their bodies can do rather than how they appear. This shift in perspective is crucial for mental and emotional health.

---

## 6 CULTURAL CHANGE AND GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

### Promotion of Equality and Respect:

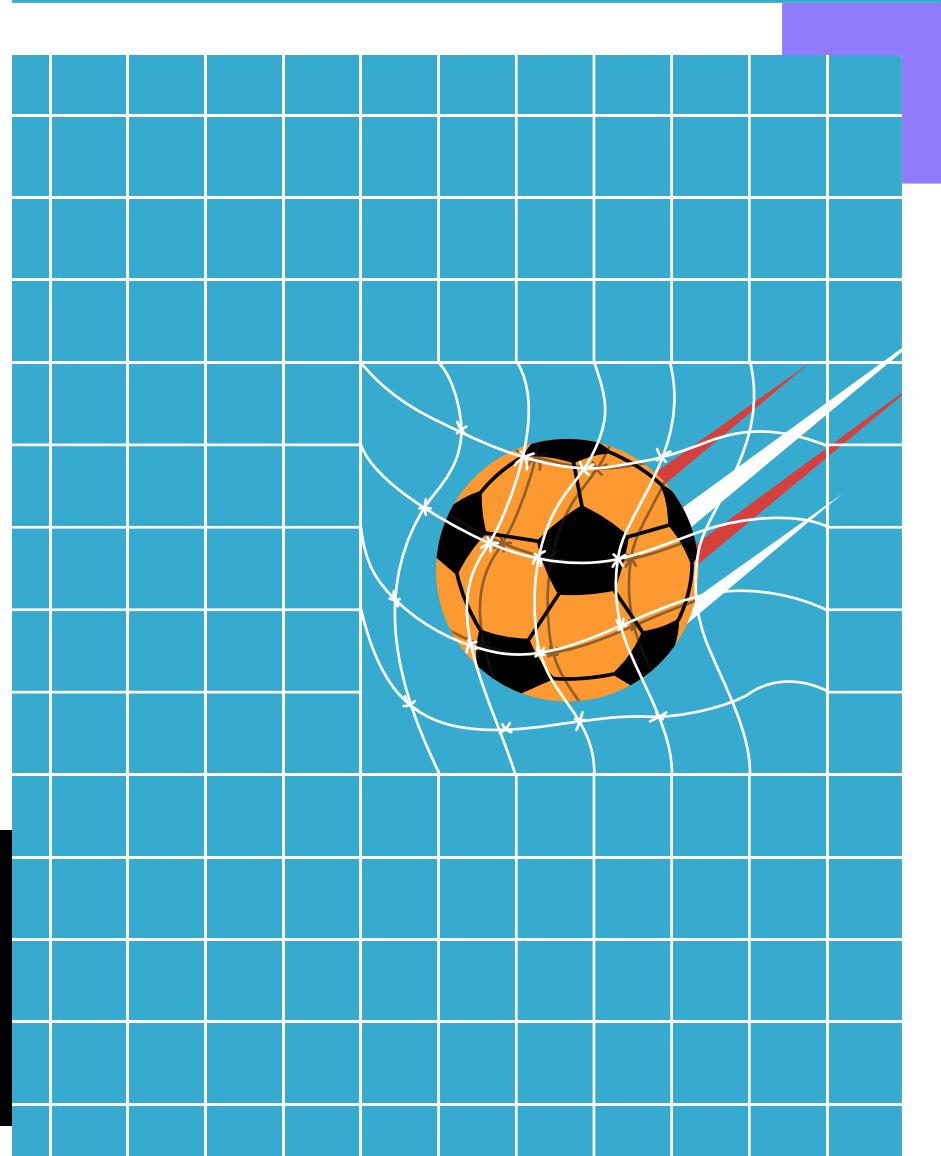
Sport can serve as a platform to promote values of equality, respect and tolerance, contributing to a culture that values diversity and inclusion.

### Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

Gender equality in sport contributes to several SDGs, including quality education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), reduced inequalities (SDG 10), and peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16).

**By advocating and promoting gender equality in and through sport, we can harness these benefits not just for women and girls, but for society as a whole.**

The empowerment of women through sport is a critical pathway towards achieving a more equitable, healthy and inclusive world.



# SPORT FOR GENERATION EQUALITY PRINCIPLES

- 1** Undertake efforts to promote women's leadership and gender equality in governance models
- 2** Undertake efforts to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls in and through sport
- 3** Undertake efforts to close the gap in investment in women's sport and promote equal economic opportunities for women and girls
- 4** Undertake opportunities to promote women's equal participation and bias-free representation in sports media
- 5** Undertake efforts to support equal opportunities for girls in sport, physical activity and physical education
- 6** Agree to monitor and publicly report on progress on an annual basis



# PRINCIPLE 1:

## UNDERTAKE EFFORTS TO PROMOTE WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND GENDER EQUALITY IN GOVERNANCE MODELS



Although women's participation in sport has been steadily increasing, the proportion of women being granted sports leadership positions has not followed suit. The opportunities for women in leadership roles remain minimal in comparison to their male counterparts.

Evidence suggests that a greater number of women in leadership positions positively impacts an organisation's performance and has a significantly positive impact on female sports participation rates.

Therefore, as recommended by the IOC in the **Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance**, establishing high-level strategic governance for advancing female leadership and promoting overall gender equality is fundamental to guiding a gender-responsive sports organisation to implement all of its principles successfully.

# AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION



## Lack of gender equality in the policies and procedures of the sports organisation

Analysis of organisational policies and procedures in terms of gender equality.

## Underrepresentation of women in decision-making

- Map the gender ratio within the Executive Board, the General Assembly and committees/commissions.
- Identify barriers that prevent women from participating in decision-making.
- Identify the attitudes of executives towards women managers.
- Identify the organisation's culture in relation to diversity (gender, religion, language, disability, sexual orientation, etc.).

## Lack of access to opportunities for professional development

- Identify professional development opportunities for women.
- Map the gender ratio in terms of access to professional development opportunities.
- Identify barriers that prevent women from accessing professional development opportunities.
- Identify discriminatory practices.
- Identify gender discriminatory practices in the organisation (policies and procedures related to Executive Board elections, recruitment, promotions, pay and benefits, etc.).

# AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION

CONTINUED

## POLICIES AND MANAGEMENT



### Increase the number of women in decision-making

- Ensure gender balance in all decision-making positions. Today, research considers gender balance to mean between 40% and 60% representation.

### Provide access to opportunities for professional development

- Provide equal access to professional development programmes for women and men.

- Establish measures to increase the number of women on the board, like a gender quota. The IOC recommends, and research supports, a minimum of 30% representation of each gender among members.
- Establish a mentorship mechanism for women candidates for decision-making positions.
- Build a pipeline of women candidates for governance roles.
- Develop policies and procedures that will enable women to progress in leadership.
- Develop and implement gender equality training for executives.

- Foster women's participation in leadership development programmes.
- Support women executives as role models and establish platforms for them to share knowledge and experience with women candidates.

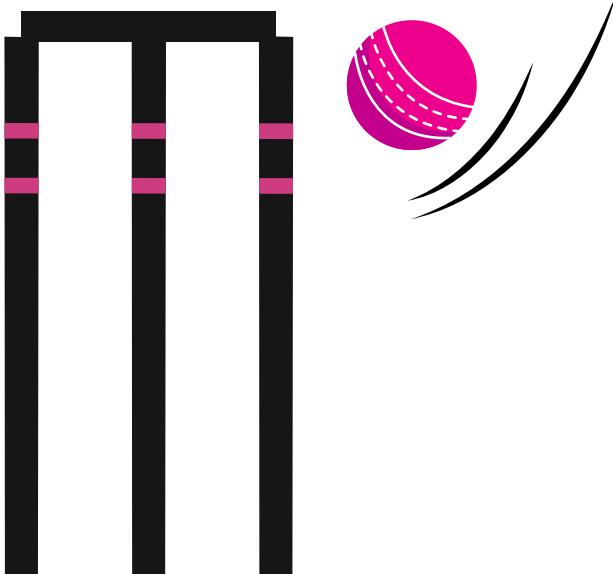
### Promote positive practices

- Ensure the career advancement process is equal for all genders.
- Ensure gender balance in recruitment committees.
- Proactively communicate with all members of underrepresented genders during recruitment.
- Provide opportunities to access childcare services (set up a lactation area, provide a shuttlebus for breastfeeding leave, etc.).
- Provide family-orientated policies (flexible working hours, part-time work, home-based work, etc.).

# CASE STUDY

## PROMOTING FEMALE LEADERSHIP IN CRICKET:

*A case study of New Zealand Cricket*



In 2015, New Zealand Cricket commissioned an independent study to examine the situation of women's participation and leadership in cricket. The findings revealed a concerning lack of female representation both on the field and in governance positions within the sport. Only 6% of cricket board directors were women, reflecting a systemic issue that needed urgent attention. Recognising the need for change, New Zealand Cricket embarked on a journey to address gender inequality and promote female leadership within the organisation.

The cornerstone of New Zealand Cricket's efforts to promote gender equality in cricket is the Female Leadership Development Framework. This framework encompasses a range of initiatives aimed at supporting the development and advancement of women and girls within the sport. The key initiatives included in the framework are as follows:

### Women in Cricket Governance Steering Group

Established in 2017, this group was tasked with driving governance change within New Zealand Cricket. By providing educational resources and tools for identifying female leadership talent, the steering group laid the foundation for increased female representation on cricket boards.

### Quota System

In 2018, New Zealand Cricket introduced a quota system requiring every member and district association board to have at least two female directors. Despite initial resistance, the target was achieved, leading to a significant increase in female representation at governance level.

### Increased Quota Target

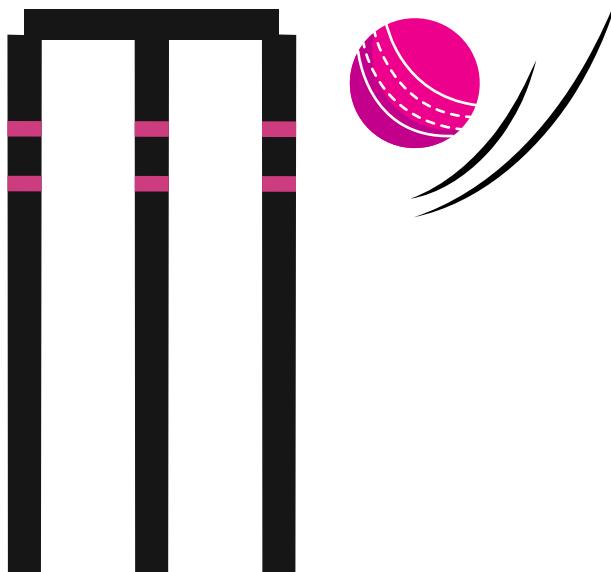
Building on the success of the initial quota system, New Zealand Cricket raised the target to 40% female representation on all boards by 2021, aligning with broader diversity targets set by Sport New Zealand.

# CASE STUDY

CONTINUED

## PROMOTING FEMALE LEADERSHIP IN CRICKET:

*A case study of New Zealand Cricket*



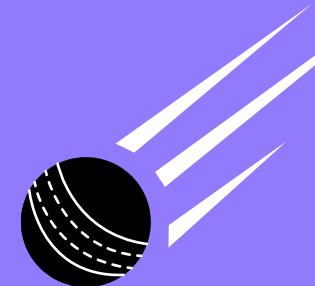
### **Female Leadership Development Programmes**

Under the framework, New Zealand Cricket developed specific programmes aimed at nurturing female leadership talent within cricket. These included the Aspiring Female Umpire Programme, the Pathway to Performance Coaching Programme, and Senior Leadership Development initiatives, all of which provide pathways for women to advance within the sport.

### **Contestable Fund**

New Zealand Cricket established a fund to support locally led initiatives aimed at promoting female leadership in cricket. This fund has enabled grassroots initiatives to flourish, contributing to the overall goal of increasing gender diversity and female leadership within the sport.

**The implementation of New Zealand Cricket's Female Leadership Development Framework has yielded tangible results. Between 2016 and 2022, the representation of women in paid employment increased from 21% to 37%. Moreover, the senior leadership team of New Zealand now includes four women, marking a significant improvement from previous years.**



# PRINCIPLE 2:

## UNDERTAKE EFFORTS TO PREVENT AND RESPOND TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN AND THROUGH SPORT



Gender-based violence against women and girls is a global human rights violation and public health issue. In the sports context, efforts increasingly focus on prevention, creating safe, inclusive environments that reduce the risk of harm before it occurs. All forms of such violence are preventable, but prevention is effective only with robust, trauma-informed response systems centred on the rights and needs of those impacted. Sports organisations must commit to both: preventing violence and ensuring a trustworthy, competent and compassionate response when it occurs.

While this principle focuses on women and girls, many actions apply to other forms of gender-based and interpersonal violence in sport. Sport holds great potential for prevention, using its reach and visibility to promote gender equality, challenge harmful behaviours and strengthen protective factors - especially among young people. This potential is realised only when sport itself is safe, with organisations modelling equitable, respectful behaviours in society.

# AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION

## PROBLEM ASSESSMENT

### Understanding the problem

Sports organisations should begin by assessing the scope and nature of violence against women and girls in their context. This includes:

- Identifying all forms of violence that may occur in sport, including physical, psychological, sexual and economic violence, and considering how such harm is inflicted (in person, online, verbally or in writing).
- Mapping patterns, settings and power dynamics that may enable or conceal such violence.

### Reviewing current policies

Organisations must also review existing policies, procedures and environments with a focus on safety and gender equality:

- Assess whether current safeguarding measures explicitly address violence against women and girls, and whether they are applied consistently to all roles (athletes, coaches, staff and volunteers).
- Examine the design and functioning of sports facilities through a safe sport lens, considering visibility, access control, privacy and other environmental factors that may influence risk and trust.

### Policies and management

Effective prevention and response to violence in sport requires clear policies and strong management structures. While approaches must be tailored to each organisation's context, the following elements are essential:

#### Prevention

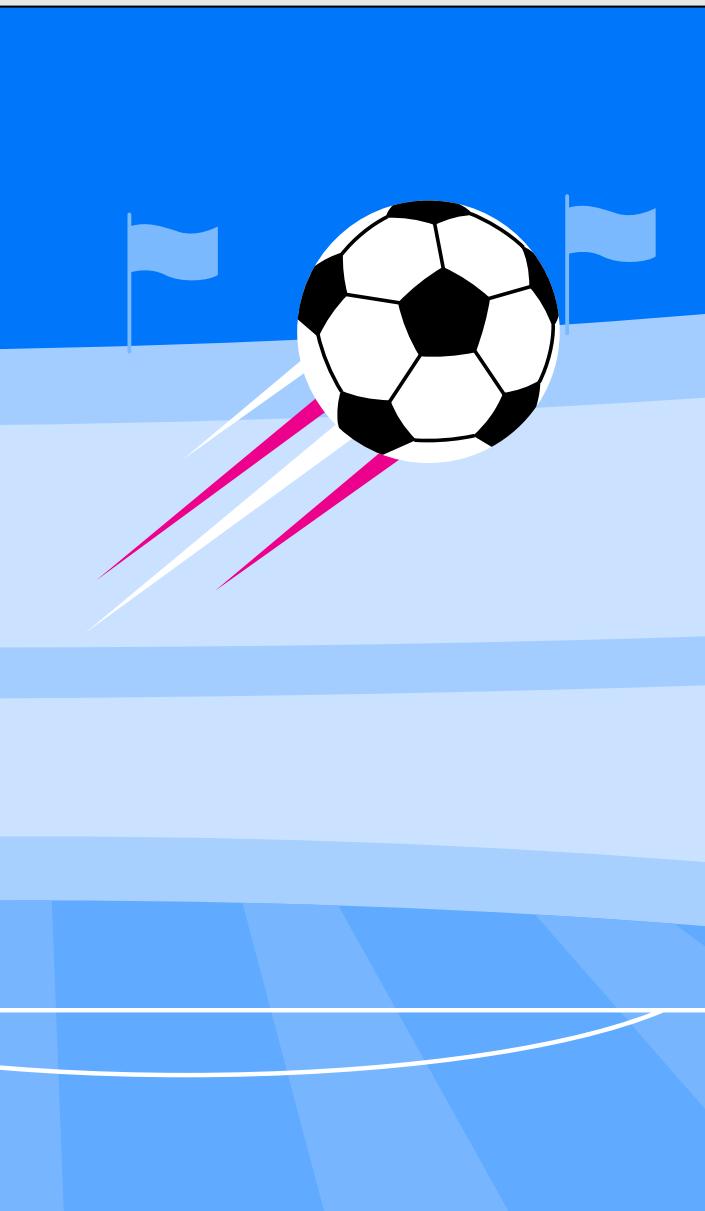
- Adopt and implement a comprehensive policy on preventing all forms of violence in sport.
- Develop practical tools such as codes of ethics, recruitment protocols (e.g. background checks) and safeguarding guidelines.
- Provide training and education for all stakeholder groups (athletes, coaches, staff, volunteers and leadership).
- Appoint a trained safeguarding officer or focal point with a clearly defined mandate.

#### Response

- Establish accessible and confidential reporting procedures.
- Set up clear investigation and case management systems that are trauma-informed and person-centred.
- Ensure appropriate support services are available, including referrals to specialist organisations where needed.
- Promote a culture of trust, accountability and non-retaliation for those who come forward.

# AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION

CONTINUED



## For building a safe and inclusive sports environment

- Systematically gather and analyse data on the prevalence, nature and patterns of violence in sport, applying a gender lens, to inform policy, track progress and guide trauma-informed case management.
- Promote a culture of safe sport through awareness-raising, education and open dialogue at all levels of the organisation.
- Develop clear, consistent safeguarding policies that outline the organisation's commitment to prevention and response, with defined roles and responsibilities.
- Work closely with key stakeholders and strengthen governance structures to embed safeguarding practices across all activities and levels.
- Implement proactive measures to reduce risks and prevent harm, including transparent procedures for identifying and addressing concerns.
- Ensure that all responses to safeguarding issues are rooted in empathy and care, addressing the needs of those affected while taking appropriate action when harm occurs.
- Provide accessible and comprehensive support, including psychological, medical and legal assistance, to anyone impacted by violence in sport.
- Establish internal and external accountability mechanisms to monitor safeguarding commitments, ensure transparency and uphold trust.
- Monitor safeguarding implementation and use lessons learned from cases and feedback to continuously improve policies and practices.

# CASE STUDY

## TACKLING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN SPORT:

*Chile's leading role in  
Latin America*



**In 2020, the Chilean Congress approved Law 21.197, which modified previous legislation and initiated a structural change to promote mechanisms for preventing and sanctioning sexual harassment, sexual abuse, discrimination and mistreatment in the nation's sports community.**

**Based on this new national legislation, Chile's federal government – through its Ministry of Sport and the National Sports Institute (IND) – has issued a series of resolutions and protocols to both prevent and respond to violence against women and girls in and through sport.**

The law determined that various government bodies are responsible for new regulations on the subject and also created Chile's National Sports Arbitration Committee (CNAD) to hear any claims made against a sports organisation for

non-compliance in preventing and sanctioning any kind of gender-based violence.

A number of measures and guidelines resulted from this first piece of legislation, such as Supreme Decree N° 22 (2020), entitled Protocol Against Sexual Harassment, in which the Ministry of Sport set out principles and rules designed to prevent and sanction conduct that constitutes gender-based violence. This established a set of obligations that sports organisations, their boards of directors and their members must fulfil in order to make the sports ecosystem a more suitable and safer space for girls, women and all those who are part of it.

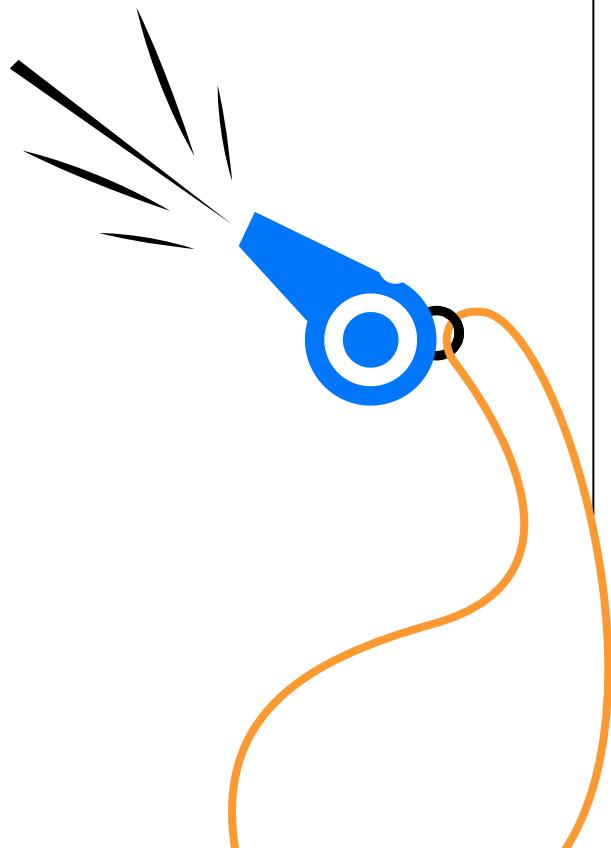
In 2021, the IND, a government agency that promotes actions and policies to develop national sport, also regulated its own internal policy – called the “institutional policy against sexual abuse, sexual harassment, discrimination and mistreatment” – whilst funding and

# CASE STUDY

CONTINUED

## TACKLING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN SPORT:

*Chile's leading role in Latin America*



implementing various initiatives to disseminate information, knowledge and forms of prevention in relation to gender-based violence in the sporting community.

More recently, in 2023, Law 21.197 was updated with Law 21.605, specifying protections within the scope of the National Sports Policy and setting out a series of new protocols for protection, investigation and punishment in this area. It also made the Chilean Olympic and Paralympic Committees responsible for updating their protocols and acting under the current legislation.

These legal frameworks establish basic parameters for policies on preventing and combatting gender-based violence in the country's sports ecosystem, and have been developed with other scopes, including identifying and monitoring actions in this area. One recent initiative was the creation of the IND "Unit for the Prevention of Vulnerable Conduct and Gender

Equality", whose remit and tasks include fulfilling the objectives of these laws and protocols through the implementation of communication plans that promote awareness around the topic, with a special emphasis on the gender perspective.



**The design and implementation, at various levels of government, of policies to combat gender-based violence in sport, supported by robust national legislation, are recommended mechanisms of action to ensure that the national and regional sports ecosystem is strengthened to guarantee that all athletes can participate in violence-free, safe and inclusive sport.**

# PRINCIPLE 3:

## UNDERTAKE EFFORTS TO CLOSE THE GAP IN INVESTMENT IN WOMEN'S SPORT AND PROMOTE EQUAL ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS



Despite the significant strides that have been made towards gender equality, female sport still faces disparities in investment and opportunities. Creating equal opportunities for both female and male athletes is fundamental to closing the gender gap. By providing equal funding, facilities and support, organisations can help level the playing field and create opportunities for women and girls to thrive.

Additionally, increasing the representation of female coaches, referees and technical professionals in sport helps break down gender stereotypes and promotes inclusivity. These individuals play pivotal roles in shaping the culture of sport and inspiring future generations of athletes.

Ultimately, by embracing gender equality and providing equal investment and opportunity for all participants, sports organisations can create a more diverse, inclusive and thriving sports community.

# AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION

## PROBLEM ASSESSMENT



### Analysis of current policies/procedures and discriminatory practices regarding women's sport

- Analyse organisational policies and procedures in terms of athletes', coaches' and technical officials' rights and opportunities (recruitment, salaries, playing conditions, prizes, sponsorships, parental leave policies, etc.).
- Analyse sports facilities, the quantity and quality of sports equipment, training hours, technical and health services, the number of tournaments/competition matches, the qualifications/experience of coaches, etc. in terms of gender equality, and identify discriminatory practices against women.

### Barriers for women's participation in sport

- Identify barriers that prevent women and girls from participating in sport.
- Identify reasons that women and girls drop out of sport.
- Identify barriers that prevent women from taking coaching positions.
- Identify the attitudes of executives, athletes, coaches, referees and technical officials/support professionals towards female athletes, coaches and referees.

# AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION

CONTINUED

## POLICIES AND MANAGEMENT



### Increase the number of female athletes

- Develop and implement policies and procedures that will pave the way for women to participate at all levels.
- Create strategies to prevent girls and women from dropping out of sport by understanding the reasons for this dropout.
- Develop strategies/a roadmap for young female athletes to pursue professional sports careers.

### Increase the number of female coaches and referees

- Develop programmes and policies that will pave the way for women coaches.
- Develop strategies that prepare young female athletes for coaching and refereeing positions.
- Ensure gender balance in coaching and refereeing positions at all levels.

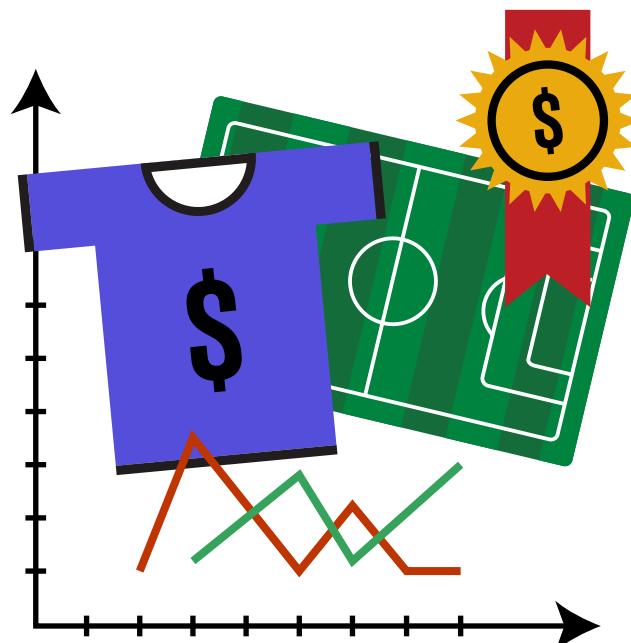
### Promote positive practices

- Ensure an equal living wage/salary for female and male athletes, coaches, referees and technical officials/support professionals.
- Ensure equal mechanisms for prizes and awards for female and male athletes.
- Ensure equal technical and health services for female and male athletes.
- Ensure equal transport and accommodation for female and male athletes.
- Provide opportunities for female athletes to benefit from sponsorships.
- Provide equally qualified/experienced coaches for women's and men's sports.

# CASE STUDY

## LEVELLING THE PLAYING FIELD:

*The impact of the Brazilian Olympic Committee's Women's Sports Development Programme (PDEF)*



**In 2021, with the creation of the Women in Sport Area, the Brazilian Olympic Committee (COB) created a line of funding to improve the sporting environment for women. This line of funding was established by setting aside a budget to finance projects and actions, through partnerships with Brazilian Olympic Confederations, to develop and train athletes, coaches, referees and managers, encouraging female participation and qualification in all sectors of Brazilian sport.**

The major innovation of this type of funding programme for women's sport was that all

the planning, evaluation and monitoring of the stages of this line of grants were coordinated by women managers who head up the COB's Women in Sport Area. As such, right from the start of the funding process, the assessment made specified that the Confederations needed to appoint women leaders in their organisations so that they could be the "focal point" for coordinating, managing and executing these proposals. One of the objectives of this was to enhance the integration and development of women managers so that more of them could take on leadership roles in Brazilian sport.

In 2023, the funding line made it possible to implement eight projects from several Olympic Confederations. In the second year of implementation, in 2024, 15 projects benefitted from the funds, representing an increase in the COB's budget. The rise in the number of projects submitted from one year to the next was around 119%, evidence of the initiative's reach.

# CASE STUDY

## CONTINUED

### LEVELLING THE PLAYING FIELD:

#### *The impact of the Brazilian Olympic Committee's Women's Sports Development Programme (PDEF)*

The Evaluation Committee that analysed the projects submitted included women managers from the Women in Sport, Sports Development, and Sports Planning and Performance areas, as well as members of the COB's Women in Sport Commission. Another important addition in the second year of the funding line was the possibility for the Confederations to present their projects to the Evaluation Committee in order to supplement the information sent on the application form. Through the presentations, some Confederations were able to introduce their women managers, empowering them and bringing them closer

to a leadership role in the development of women's sport.

The funding line was further designed to support Confederations that are starting to work more closely and diligently with women's sport, as well as Confederations that are already implementing actions and policies for girls and women in their sports, and are seeking extra support from the COB to consolidate and expand these programmes. Three categories were established for proposing initiatives with distinct budget limits: A+, A and B.

With these different categories of funding, the PDEF encourages the submission of specific plans and projects for all areas of women's sport, not just to promote athletes' national and international results. This funding line also seeks to support systemic changes in the advancement of all sectors of women's sport, with relevant actions that integrate development and training programmes for athletes, coaches, referees and officials.

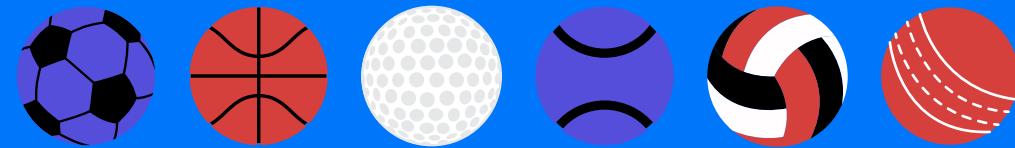
**Of the 79 projects submitted in the second funding cycle in 2024, around 35 sought to build technical capacity in some sector of women's sport within their discipline.** Other projects sought to combine training and sporting exchanges, indicating that they would also like to help more women get the necessary qualifications and aid with their development, especially by providing training for female coaches. This demand highlights the need to invest more in the development and training of women in all areas of sport, notably in technical commission and sports management positions.



All beneficiaries of the projects approved under the programme were required to undergo the organisation's mandatory courses, developed by the Brazilian Olympic Institute (IOB), such as the "Balancing the Game: Gender Equality in Sport" course created in partnership with UN Women Brazil under the framework of One Win Leads to Another (OWLA).

# PRINCIPLE 4:

## UNDERTAKE EFFORTS TO PROMOTE WOMEN'S EQUAL PARTICIPATION AND BIAS-FREE REPRESENTATION IN SPORTS MEDIA

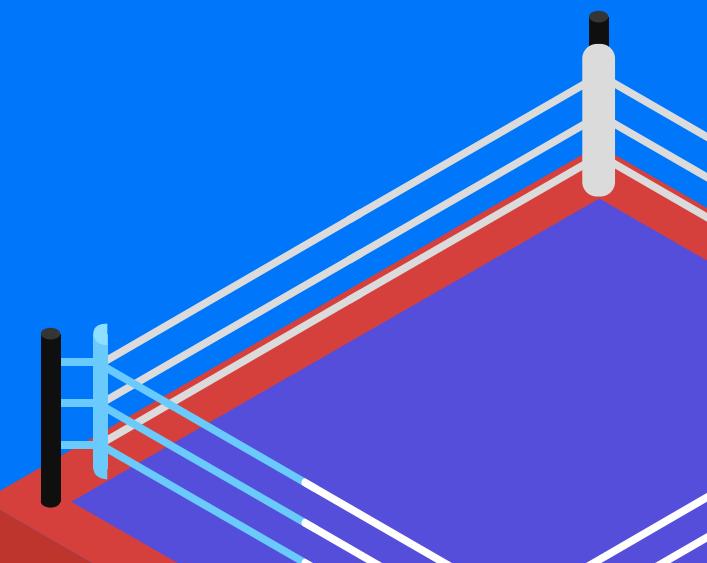


Despite the steady increase in the volume and quality of women's sport, women's teams and athletes continue to be underrepresented across all platforms of media. Increasing the representation of sportswomen in the media, together with women involved in the production of sports-related media, has positive implications for the elimination of harmful stereotypes and the promotion of positive role models.

By portraying female athletes without discrimination and ensuring equal coverage and representation, sports organisations can contribute significantly to promoting gender equality, and have a positive impact on participation and increased investment. By looking at women's sport without bias, and putting the right strategies and investment in place, the media can play a crucial role in creating a more inclusive and diverse sporting landscape.

# AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION

## GENDER-STEREOTYPED PRESENTATION



### Underrepresentation of women employees in sports media

- Identify the gender ratio in all positions in sports media (managers, editors, news reporters, commentators, programme producers, technicians, etc.).

### Underrepresentation of women's sport in all forms of media

- Identify the time and coverage allocated to female and male athletes in all forms of sports media (magazines, radio, television, web pages, social media, etc.), looking, for instance, at organisations' social media accounts for female and male teams, equal sharing through these accounts, equal numbers of TV programmes, and equal broadcasting time allocated for women and men in sport.

- Identify the gender ratio in sports visuals used in all organisational communications (advertising materials, marketing campaigns, etc.).

### Gender-stereotyped presentation of female athletes in all forms of communications

- Identify gender-stereotyped presentations and sexist language in broadcasting activities in sports media, such as presenting female athletes in feminine roles and with sexual references rather than an emphasis on their sporting performance, using vocabulary referring to men (sportsman, etc.), or asking female athletes gender-biased questions during interviews.
- Identify gender-stereotyped expressions in the media communications of managers, athletes and coaches/referees.
- Identify the gender-stereotyped presentations of female athletes with a disability, as they may be doubly mistreated, with the media mostly showing the disability rather than technique or sporting performance.
- Ensure that athletes, managers and coaches use gender-responsive language in media communication, and that all actions follow the **IOC Portrayal Guidelines**.

# AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION

CONTINUED



**POLICIES AND MANAGEMENT**

**Ensure that athletes/managers /coaches use gender-responsive language in media communication**

- Develop training materials for gender-responsive language in media communication.
- Ensure that female and male athlete /manager/coach role models emphasise gender equality in their media communication.

## Increase the number of women working in corporate media

- Provide gender balance in all positions (managers, editors, news reporters, commentators, programme producers, technicians, interns, etc.).
- Enable female journalists to work in a safe environment.

## Increase the share of women's sports in all forms of media

- Broadcast female and male athletes/sports with equal coverage on traditional media platforms (television, radio, magazines, etc.).
- Broadcast female and male athletes/ sports with equal coverage on new media platforms (websites and social media platforms).
- Provide gender balance in the number of athlete visuals/images used in all forms of media.

## Present gender-responsive portrayals of female athletes in all forms of communications

- Develop and implement training materials for gender-responsive language in media.
- Present female athletes with their sporting identities rather than according to women's/gender roles.
- Avoid using sexualised images of female athletes.
- Increase the visibility of women role models (managers/athletes/coaches/ referees) in the media.
- Develop media campaigns emphasising gender equality in sport.
- Ensure gender balance in visuals used in organisations' communications material.

# CASE STUDY

## EMPOWERING WOMEN IN SPORTS MEDIA:

### *The success of the WINS programme*

**In the dynamic world of sports media, where narratives are crafted and voices are amplified, achieving gender equality remains a persistent challenge. However, amidst this landscape, there are a number of programmes aimed at empowering women in sports media to take up this challenge. Team Up is a sport for development programme funded by the Australian Government, comprising more than 30 partnerships across the Asia-Pacific region that are working towards gender equality in and through sport in the region.**

Under the Team Up umbrella, **Women in News and Sport (WINS)** is a training and mentoring programme that provides journalists in the Asia-Pacific region with tools to carve out a career in the traditionally male-led world of sports media. Run by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC)'s International Development Unit, the programme aims to address the challenges faced by women in sports media to build their capability and confidence. Since its creation in 2020, the WINS programme has delivered a wide range of activities in the Asia-Pacific region, with more than 130 women participants. The programme provides skills training and industry knowledge, improves multi-platform content creation (with a special focus on women's sport) and establishes networks with other women in

media and sport. The short courses offer training in all aspects of sports media, including but not limited to commentary, podcasting, investigative journalism and social media.

The WINS programme offers mentorships with WINS alumni, which involves travelling to Australia and working alongside other sports journalists at ABC. It also offers on-the-job training at major international sporting events such as the Commonwealth Games, Pacific Games, FIBA 3x3 World Cup, Women's Nations Cup, ICC T20 Women's World Cup, World Rugby Sevens and Australian Open.



The **WINS programme** is recognised by world sporting bodies for its pioneering and innovative approach to gender equality. For example, three WINS alumni were invited by FIFA to commentate at the 2019 Women's World Cup in Pacific languages. This was a result of the training they had undergone in WINS commentary workshops. The local language commentary by a Pacific women sports media team was a first and was widely celebrated.

# PRINCIPLE 5:

## UNDERTAKE EFFORTS TO SUPPORT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIRLS IN SPORT, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

**Sport, physical activity and physical education play a crucial role in girls' development, contributing significantly to their physical health, psychological well-being and overall empowerment. Through engagement in sport, physical activity and physical education, girls learn valuable lessons in teamwork, leadership, resilience and goal setting, which are transferable to other aspects of their lives.**



Despite the myriad of benefits, girls often face barriers to participating fully in sport and physical activity. Disparities in access, societal norms and cultural attitudes contribute to lower levels of participation among girls compared to boys. In many settings, girls encounter gender-specific challenges such as limited access to facilities, cultural stereotypes and societal expectations that prioritise domestic roles over sporting pursuits. These barriers not only hinder girls' physical development but also perpetuate gender inequalities in various spheres of life.

To address these challenges and promote gender equality in sport, physical activity and physical education, concerted efforts are needed to create gender-responsive and female-friendly environments. Moreover, promoting girls' empowerment through sport requires ingrained stereotypes and norms surrounding gender roles and sporting participation to be challenged.

# AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION



## PROBLEM ASSESSMENT



### Scarcity of girls' participation in sport /physical activity/physical education

- Map the ratio of girls' and boys' participation in sport at all levels.
- Map the ratio of girls' and boys' participation in school sport.
- Map the ratio of girls and boys in terms of active participants in physical education.
- Map the ratio of girls and boys who drop out of sport.

### Barriers to girls' participation in sport

- Identify personal, social, cultural and organisational barriers to girls' participation in sport/physical activity/physical education.
- Identify girls' motivation for participation in sport/physical activity/physical education.

# AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION

CONTINUED

## POLICIES AND MANAGEMENT

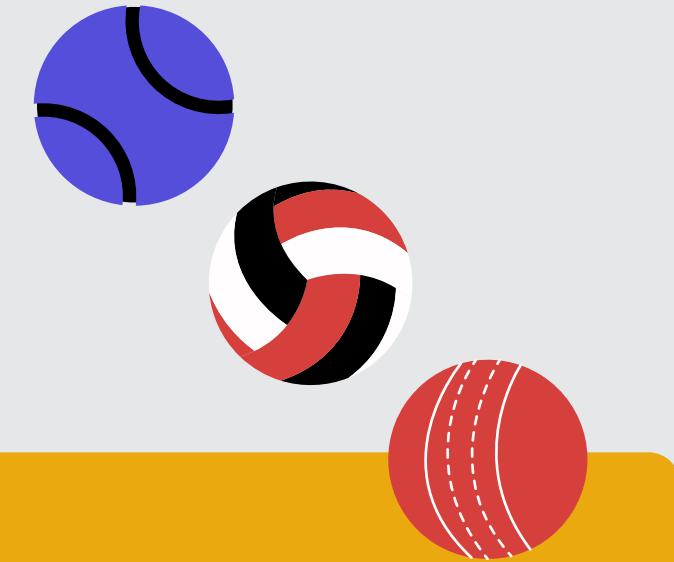


### Increase girls' participation in sport /physical activity/physical education

- Develop policies to enable girls to participate in all levels of sport and physical activity.
- Develop programmes to enable girls to participate in physical education.

### Eliminate barriers to girls' participation in sport/physical activity/physical education

- Develop and implement girl-friendly physical activity programmes.
- Develop and implement physical activity programmes to empower girls.
- Develop and implement programmes aimed at increasing the physical literacy of girls.
- Develop and implement strategies to prevent girls from dropping out of sport.
- Receive support from key people (family/ friends/physical education teachers) involved in getting girls to participate in sport/physical activity/physical education.
- Establish platforms for female athlete role models to share knowledge and experiences with girls in intramural and extramural environments.
- Develop and implement sports programmes in accessible and safe sport facilities.



# CASE STUDY

## SPORTS AS A SPACE FOR BELONGING:

*La Nuestra Fútbol Feminista Civil Association*



**La Nuestra Fútbol Feminista** is a grassroots initiative for women and LGBTIQ+ people that addresses gender inequality in Villa 31 (Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, Argentina) through female football.

**The project is an unprecedented achievement in the neighbourhood:** it regularly brings together a group of young women who train in Güemes court, a central space historically used almost exclusively by men. This initiative has improved the lack of access to sport in an adverse context due to insufficient public infrastructure. Thanks to a transformation of the community culture, a space was provided for girls and women to practise sport as a self-fulfilling activity, away from any maternal role. The unequal distribution of caregiving tasks is often a major barrier to enjoying free time, but thanks to this space, girls and young women were able to practise a sport on a weekly basis and share a space with peers.

In 2007, under the leadership of Monica Santino, the National Football Technical Director who is also a physical education instructor, sports journalist and feminist activist, the incipient women's football initiative became a space of belonging, inspired by the motto "**I stand in the court as I stand in life**". This illustrated the

multi-level transformation that La Nuestra represented for its members and the Villa 31 slum community in the city of Buenos Aires.

**In 2008, the civil association La Nuestra Fútbol Feminista was created**, a step towards institutional formalisation aimed at consolidating a space for the practice of quality football for girls, adolescents and young women from Villa 31. The proposal goes beyond sports practice; it seeks to establish a space for emotional support, reflection and expression, allowing members to reinforce their personal value, recognise and take care of their bodies, establish new relationships and consolidate group unity, while helping to support their professional integration.

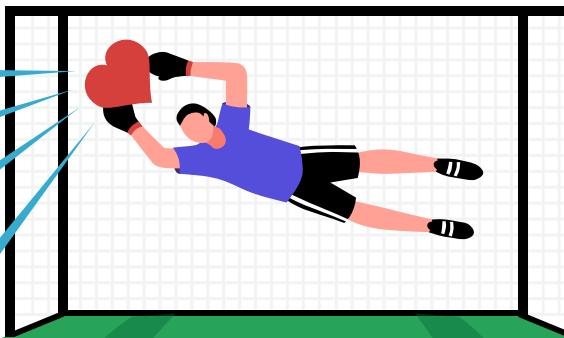
The association strengthened these strategies by hiring psychologists and football instructors engaged in feminist activism, so that participants' issues could be addressed with professional expertise.

# CASE STUDY

CONTINUED

## SPORTS AS A SPACE FOR BELONGING:

*La Nuestra Fútbol Feminista Civil Association*



La Nuestra Fútbol Feminista is a model of cultural, social and community transformation that completely changed the life of the neighbourhood by turning the barriers faced by women and LGBTIQ+ people when it comes to practising sport into intervention devices for gender

The growth of La Nuestra enabled the association to incorporate more activities throughout the years. Making sports practice more professional, it created the **Las Aliadas de la 31 (Allies of Villa 31)** **permanent team**, which participated in the **Football League for Social Inclusion** in 2019 and in the **Homeless World Cup** held in Rio de Janeiro, Paris and Mexico City in 2010, 2011 and 2012 respectively, as well as other regional and national tournaments and competitions.

Capacity building for political participation and the autonomy of the participants is achieved through a feminist governance model: all the organisation's processes are led by women and people from the LGBTIQ+ community, encouraging the leadership of young people and girls and making this visible within communities. Activist advocacy has been present in self-managed tournaments since 2014, feminist football festivals since 2015 and workshops on "football and feminism" in the National Women's

Assemblies since 2018. There is also the Coordinadora Sin Fronteras de Fútbol Feminista, which brings together various feminist clubs and spaces at national and regional level. In this way, decision-making and leadership spaces are created with a feminist perspective.

Furthermore, **La Nuestra aims to provide communication resources to amplify the voices of its members**.

The **La Nuestra TV** project was launched in 2019 and provides audiovisual production tools to young people, women, girls and LGBTIQ+ people.

Throughout its history, **La Nuestra has developed strategic alliances to enhance its impact and share the lessons learned from its experiences**. It has entered into partnerships with various levels of government, other civil society organisations and international bodies such as UN Women and Women Win.

# PRINCIPLE 6:

## AGREE TO MONITOR AND PUBLICLY REPORT ON PROGRESS ON AN ANNUAL BASIS

**Establishing robust monitoring mechanisms and specifying indicators aligned with a sports organisation's goals are paramount when it comes to driving meaningful change and fostering gender-inclusive environments. Monitoring and assessing help to identify gaps in current policies and create a roadmap for activities that can promote influential initiatives. This contributes to transparency and accountability and allows progress to be shared with stakeholders.**

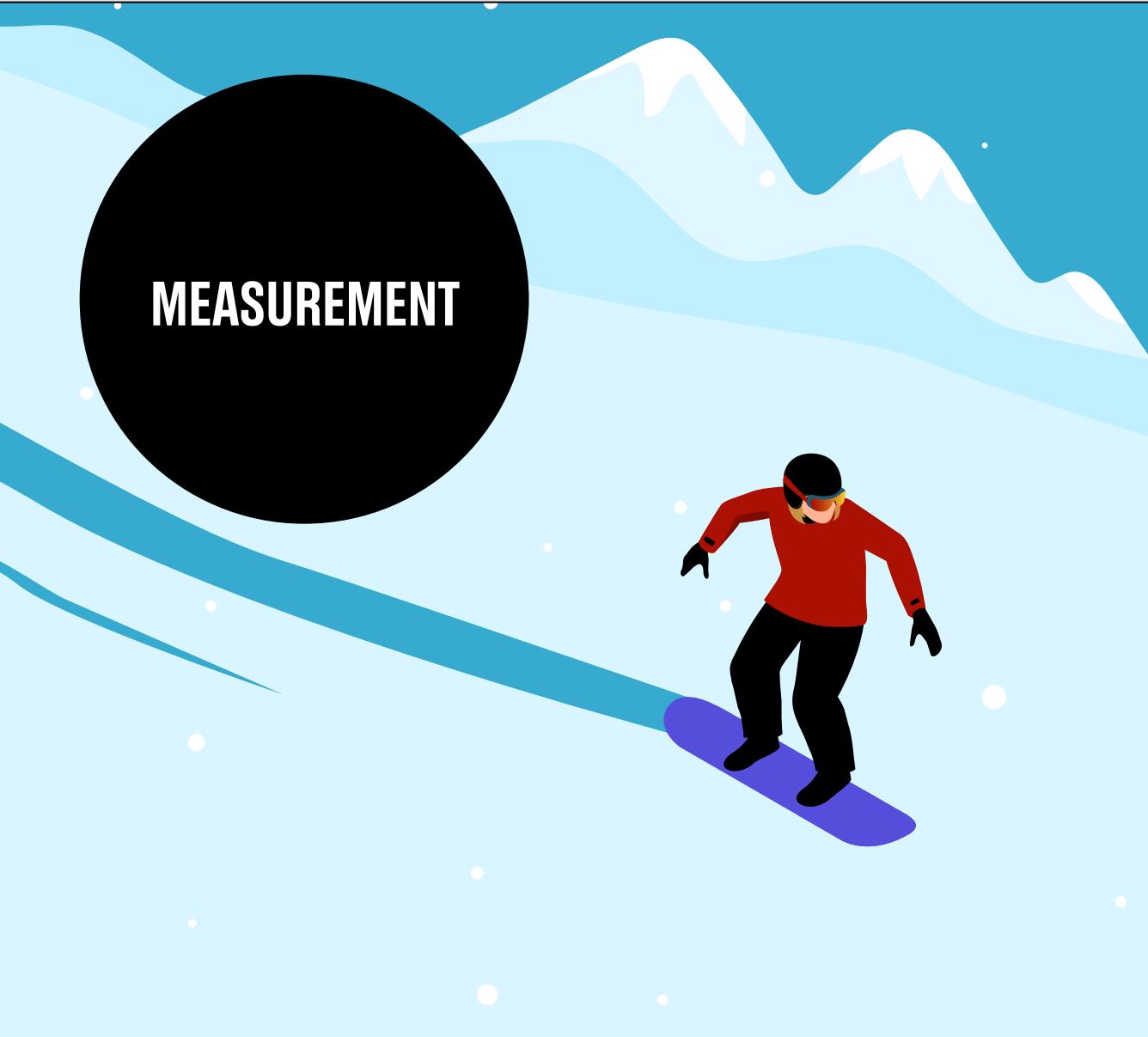


Central to this approach is adherence to the Sport for Generation Equality Principles, which provide a framework for organisations to guide their activities effectively. By aligning monitoring mechanisms with these principles, organisations can ensure that their efforts are targeted, strategic and impactful.

Whether it's increasing female participation rates, narrowing the gender pay gap or enhancing representation in leadership roles, the specified indicators serve as tangible benchmarks for progress.

Furthermore, the establishment of monitoring and assessment methods signifies commitment to transparency and accountability. By systematically tracking and evaluating their gender equality activities and initiatives, sports organisations demonstrate a willingness to be answerable to stakeholders and the broader public. This transparency not only fosters trust but also facilitates meaningful dialogue and collaboration, essential ingredients for driving sustainable change.

# AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION



## Setting goals and measuring progress

- Establish goals for each principle based on organisational capacities and priorities.
- Establish indicators for each principle reflecting organisational capacities and priorities.
- Establish platforms to monitor and evaluate the implementation of organisational gender equality measures.
- Conduct a stakeholder analysis to specify which stakeholders to collaborate with, inside or outside the organisation.
- Elicit feedback from stakeholders to evaluate managers' commitments to the empowerment of women and gender equality in sport.
- Compare current data for the six principles, identify areas of progress and stagnation, and reflect evaluations in further plans.

# AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION

CONTINUED

## REPORTING



### Transparency and accountability through reporting

- Ensure that indicators are monitored, assessed and reported on a regular basis by developing monitoring mechanisms.
- Share progress and elicit feedback from stakeholders through public reports.
- Publish the sports organisation's policies and gender equality initiatives on the official website.
- Demonstrate the sports organisation's commitment to gender equality by publishing collaborative work with stakeholders along with challenges and achievements.

# CASE STUDY

## GENDER EQUALITY PLAYBOOK:

*Oceania Football Confederation*

The Gender Equality Playbook was developed by the Oceania Football Confederation (OFC) for sports administrators within the Pacific region to advocate increasing women and girls' participation and performance in football and developing equitable sports organisations, and to address social inequalities through sports programming.

The OFC recognises that achieving gender equality in and through sport requires working together, clear planning, alignment across stakeholder groups and accountability. That is where the Gender

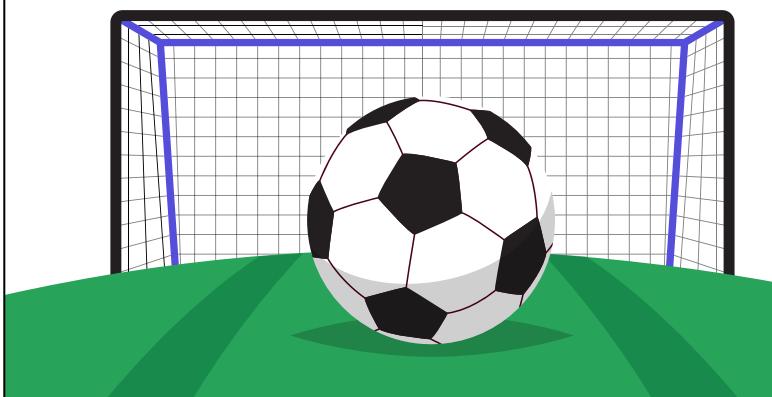
Equality Playbook comes in, acting as a single resource where all actions to create a gender-responsive organisation are in one place, ensuring everyone is working under the same rules with aligned strategies from any position.

**The Playbook is broken down into six key areas where action can be taken to promote gender equality in and through sport.** These areas are outlined in each chapter of the Playbook. They highlight the current situation and key research findings, and which actions can and should be taken to promote and enact gender equality within the football and broader sporting community.

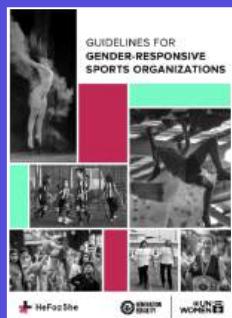
- 1. Participation**
- 2. Coaching**
- 3. Leadership**
- 4. Media and Visibility**
- 5. Promoting Gender Equality and Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls**
- 6. Policy**

The Playbook includes a monitoring tool for organisations to self-check their progress across the six focus areas of activity. The Gender Equality Scorecard is a practical and simple assessment tool for sports organisations across the Pacific to take stock of existing efforts, commitments and programmes to promote gender equality and address violence against women and girls.

The Scorecard is designed so that all people from all levels of sports organisations – board, coaches, officials, administrators and players – can contribute to filling in the checklist. This means rankings can be debated as a group and used to guide decisions about which actions to take for collective progress.



# RESOURCES



## GUIDELINES FOR GENDER-RESPONSIVE SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS

UN Women Türkiye Country Office

[Download here](#)



## BASIC UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE WITHIN THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT

*Extract of the IOC Code of Ethics*

[Download here](#)



## SAFEGUARDING ATHLETES FROM HARASSMENT AND ABUSE IN SPORT

*IOC toolkit for IFs and NOCs*

[Download here](#)



## IOC PORTRAYAL GUIDELINES

*Gender-Equal, Fair And Inclusive Representation In Sport*

[Download here](#)



## TACKLING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SPORT

*A handbook for policy makers and sports practitioners*

[Download here](#)

# TOOLKIT FOR A SPORTS ECOSYSTEM WITH A GENDER PERSPECTIVE



International  
Olympic  
Committee

