



**GLOBAL
OBSERVATORY
FOR GENDER
EQUALITY
& SPORT**

FROM RESEARCH TO ACTION

2024 Report on the GENDER EQUALITY AND SPORT+ CONFERENCE

Olympic Museum · Lausanne, Switzerland
8 October 2024

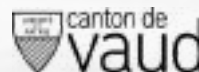


Photographer: Michael Dula | Country: Kenya
FEMALE FOOTBALL

Conference Supported by



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About GO

The mission of the Global Observatory for Gender Equality & Sport (GO) is to advance gender equality for women and girls in all their diversity through physical education, physical activity, and sport (PEPAS).

The GO has three strategic areas of action:

ENQUIRE Act as a Centralised Repository and Knowledge Hub.

Consolidate existing research, knowledge initiatives, expertise, and campaigns, gather good practices, develop evidence-based capacity-building programmes, and stimulate innovative and strategic research to bridge existing gaps.

ENGAGE Connect, Coordinate, Convene and Activate Support a collaborative and coherent intersectional movement for gender equality, women's empowerment and inclusion in and through PEPAS.

ENABLE Advocacy and Communication

Provide a high-level advocacy platform for swift dissemination of information, amplification of messages, and mobilisation of support to drive and achieve desired and impactful actions.



Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Simultaneously we also contribute to:



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Executive Summary

The Global Observatory for Gender Equality & Sport (GO) successfully held first annual conference on Gender Equality & Sport+ at the iconic Olympic Museum in Lausanne, Switzerland, on October 8th.

With the powerful theme, From Research to Action, the conference aimed to share key insights from research and best practices in the field. It provided simultaneously an essential platform for key stakeholders in the sports ecosystem to connect and stimulate collaboration in their pursuit of gender equality across all areas and levels of sport.

Participants included influential government officials, leaders from international sports federations, UN agencies, esteemed academics, advocacy groups, and private foundations, all coming together to share the latest research and best practices.

The Global Observatory is a leading global convenor and repository of research and expertise on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through physical education, physical activity, and sport (PEPAS). Dedicated to accelerating change by fostering collaboration and sharing transformative ideas.

Through collaboration and shared insights, we are on the path to creating a more equitable future for women and girls in sports.

Special thank you for support of the conference and meeting :

- UNESCO
- Swiss Confederation
- UNIL
- Canton of Vaud
- City of Lausanne



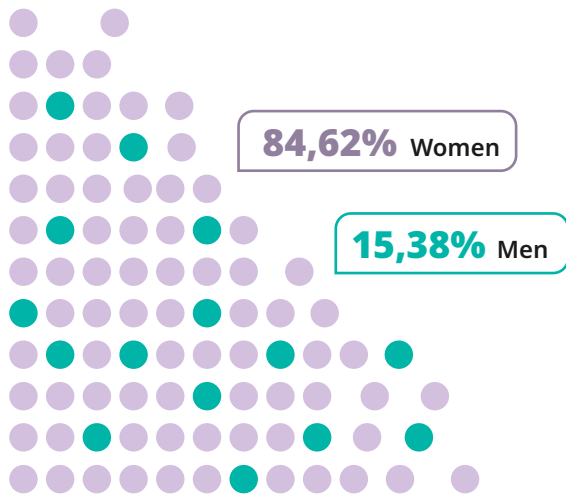
“The GO works to bridge the gap between research and decision-making, paving a way for actionable solutions to dismantle barriers to equal participation of women and girls at every level of physical education, physical activity, and sport”.

Lombe Mwambwa PhD

Research Director, GO



Attendees in Numbers

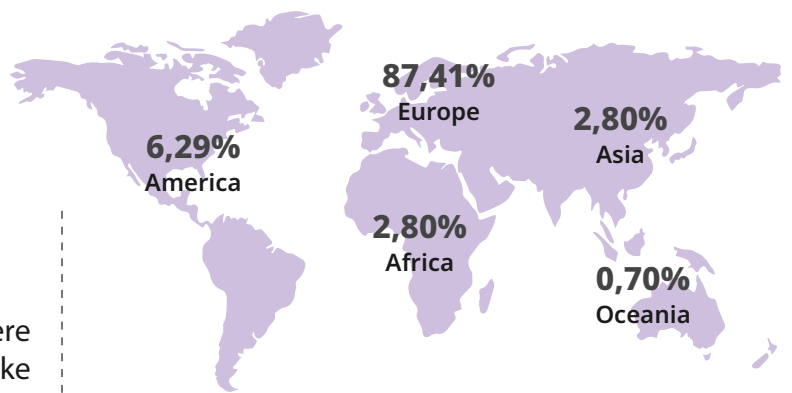


Women & Men attendees

The majority of participants in Lausanne were women, highlighting their influence and stake in gender equality in sport, physical education and physical activity.

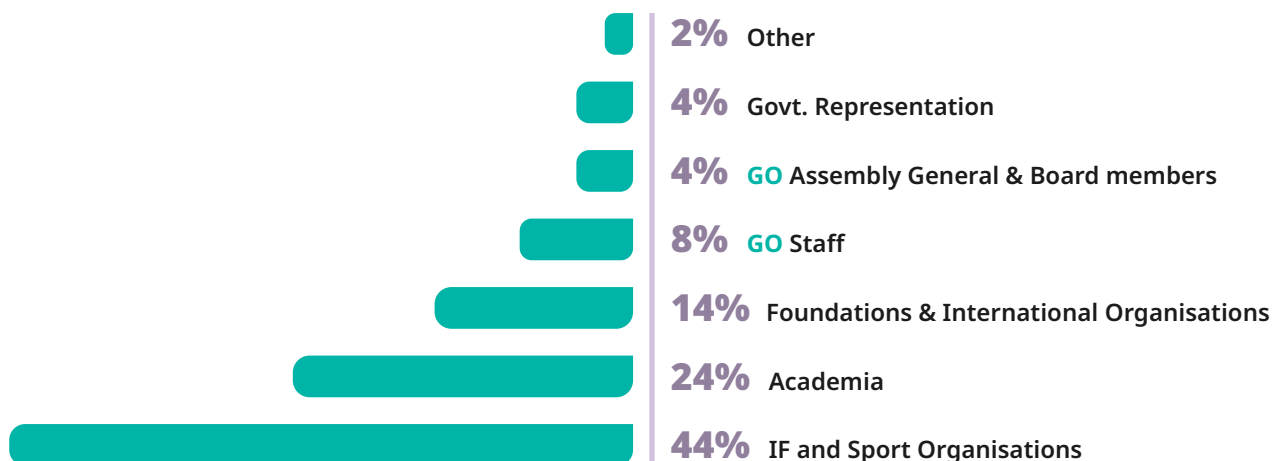
Continental Representation

Participants from five continents, representing 22 countries enriching the day with lively conversation and diverse perspectives and learnings from around the world.



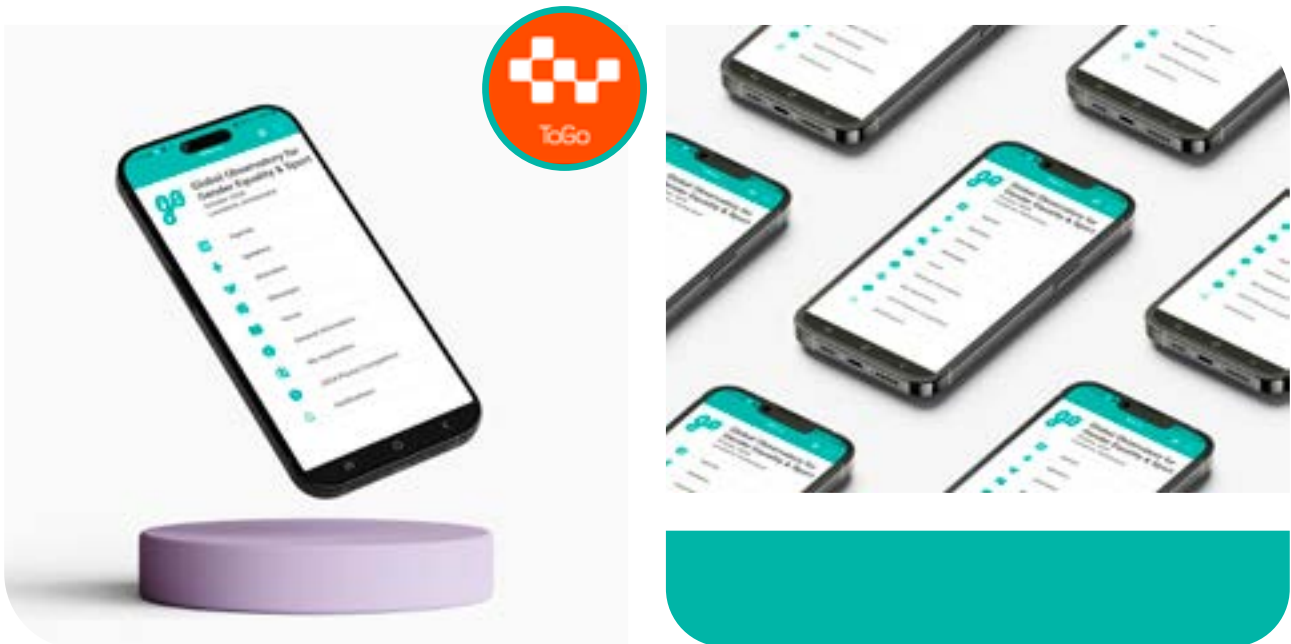
Stakeholder Representation

A diverse group of stakeholders gathered in Lausanne, creating networking opportunities and strengthening the links between knowledge and action.



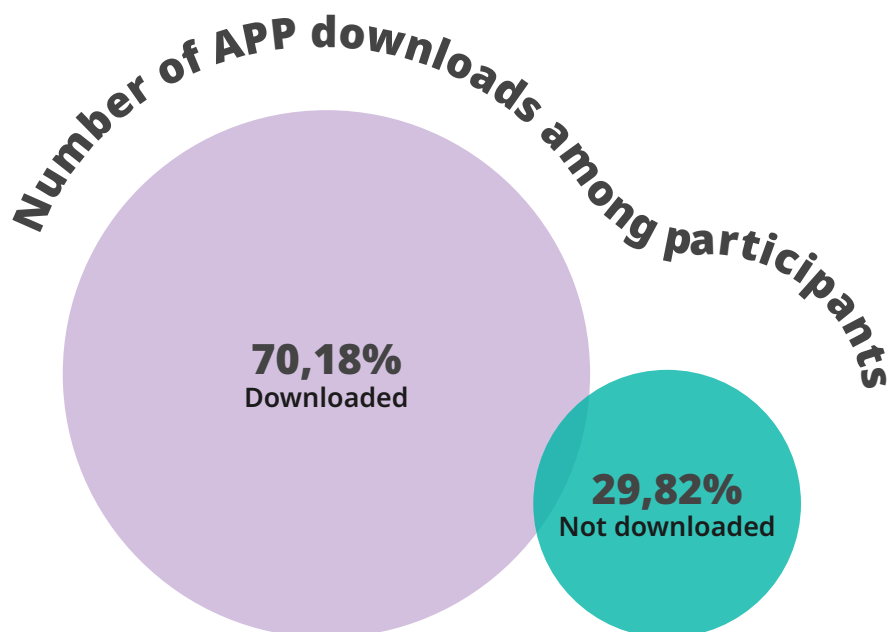
The GO App powered by EventWorks

The GO APP was live throughout the day allowing participants to consult the schedule and connect with each other.



GO App usage

The GO APP generated significant interest, with an impressive 70% of participants downloading it and engaging with one another throughout the day. This level of interaction highlights its appeal and the value it brought to users.



GO Closed Events

Several important GO meetings took place on the sidelines of the conference.

The GO General Assembly

The GO's General Assembly held its annual meeting at which they elected a new Board and President to lead the Global Observatory for Gender Equality & Sport.

The GO Board

The outgoing Board held an information session to provide strategic briefing for Board candidates. The newly elected Board takes effect on December 1, 2024.

[About the Board](#) 

The GO Expert Group







The GO's Expert Group on Gender Genderbased Violence in Sport held its meeting, bringing together a diverse array of global experts with extensive experience in research, policy, and practice.

By deliberating on key themes, research agenda and policy focus. The Expert Group provided a vital input for enhancing the accountability and quality of the organisation's initiatives, ensuring our work meets the highest standards. Their insights and guidance confirmed the GO priorities and expertise engagement.

[About the Expert Group](#) 

GO Academic Partners' Meeting

The GO's Academic Partners planned and agreed on collaboration and research priorities. The following attended the meeting:

- Griffith University, Australia 
- Seijo University, Japan 
- Stellenbosch University, South Africa 
- Loughborough University, UK 
- Louisiana State University, USA 
- Power to Play Period, USA 

Conference Proceedings

Welcome remarks

Gregoire Junod, Mayor of Lausanne

At the opening of the GO's inaugural conference in Lausanne, he emphasized the importance of the event for the organisation. Urging stakeholders to make this gathering an annual occasion, working together to promote change for women and girls in sports.



Keynote address



Esther Eghobamien-Mshelia

Vice Chair, UN CEDAW

[Addressing Gender Equality and Womens Rights In Sports Ending VAWG](#)

Key takeaways

CEDAW's Role Critical for monitoring state accountability on women's rights.

Barriers Cultural bias, unequal pay, and harassment limit women's representation.

Reporting CEDAW promotes the involvement of sports stakeholders and civil society to enhance their understanding of specific country measures, ensuring accountability of State Parties.

Engagement Strengthening ties among CEDAW, the Global Observatory, and sports stakeholders are essential for effective policy making and protecting women's rights.

CEDAW State Accountability Mechanisms

CEDAW holds State Parties accountable for gender equality across all spheres of society through regular and obligatory reporting and assessments on women's participation and related policies. The committee reviews these reports, assesses progress, identifies gaps, and offers recommendations.

Session 1

Advancing Women in Governance and Leadership: Practices and Policies

Session Moderator

Diane Huffmann

President, Women Sport International



Lucy Piggot PhD

Associate Professor in Sport Science, Norwegian university of Science & Technology

 Gender Inclusion in Sport Organisations

Presenting the latest research on the status of women in leadership in sports organisations, she showcased successful examples from Norway and the United Kingdom who have deployed strategies like quotas and targets have effectively increased women's representation in leadership roles, applied intentionally. Disparities remain in different country contexts. Further qualitative research and efforts are needed to confront cultural beliefs about the role of women.



Rachel Mait

Project Impact Manager, TAFISA

 Girls Positive Safe Coaching Pathway

Shared TAFISA's capacity-building programme, focused on empowering coaches, it is implemented through the organisation's 400 members across 170 countries. The programme aims to improve gender equality for women and girls in sports at the grassroots level.



Sergey Lyzhin

Project Manager, ASOIF

Women Lead Sports

ASOIF launched a leadership programme aimed at empowering women to be elected and to successfully serve their terms. This programme assists its members in meeting the IOC requirement of having 30% women on governing boards of International Federations (IFs). It highlights concrete examples of women who have attained leadership roles after completing the training. Over the past four years, the programme has inspired many more women to pursue leadership positions and has trained over 300 participants.



Aya Noguchi

Deputy Director, International Research Centre for Sport and Gender Equality (SGE), Seijo University

ASEAN-Japan Actions on Sport: Gender Equality

This transformative research programme aims to promote gender equality in sports in the ASEAN region. Funded by the Japanese government in collaboration with ten Southeast Asian countries, it seeks to establish a system for collecting data on gender inequalities. The programme focuses on understanding the barriers that girls and women encounter in sports through an historical and cultural lens using gender-disaggregated data.



Olivia Conrad

Senior Project Officer, Council of Europe

All in Plus Leadership Coaching

Presented preliminary findings from All In Plus, a joint initiative of the European Union and Council of Europe. The study is dedicated to implementing a comprehensive data collection campaign on gender equality in sports, with a specific focus on key indicators such as leadership, coaching, participation, equality policies, gender-based violence, and media/communication.



Session 2

What is Gender-Based Violence in Sport?

Keynote address



Professor Kari Fasting

Professor Emerita, Norwegian School of Sport Sciences & Board Director, Women Sport international

Key takeaways

Definitions and Data Understanding what constitutes violence and how it is measured is essential for effective research and policy development.

Prevalence and Incidence Research examines gender-based violence (GBV) experiences over a lifetime or specific time points to highlight its extent.

Disclosure and Reporting There is an urgent need for improved reporting systems to help authorities act against perpetrators and prevent future incidents.

Case study Highlighted the reporting system of the Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committees which serves as a significant case study in this area.

- Panel conversation -



Emma Pullen PhD

Session Moderator - Senior Lecturer in Sports Management, Loughborough University



Kari Fasting PhD

Professor Emerita, Norwegian School of Sport Sciences & Board Director, Women Sport international



Joanna Maranhao

Network Coordinator, sport &



Right Alliance

Nancy McLennan Programme



Specialist & QPE Coordinator, UNESCO

Emma Kavanagh PhD

Associate Professor in Sport Psychology



& Safe Sport, HCPC, Bournemouth University

Key takeaways

Definitions Think critically about what they mean for data collection and what happens in practice.

A Global Priority Ending GBV is recognised as a Global priority by UNESCO's 110 member states.

Digital landscape can inflict real harm, with non-contact violence often underestimated. Highlighting an urgent need for more research to create effective policies for preventing online GBV.

Data Collection is important to understand the roots and patterns of GBV and to develop violence prevention policies.

Awareness & Communication UNESCO's "Change the Game" campaign garnered 900 million unique views.

Advocacy People targeted by GBV are part of the solution and should not be considered as damaging the sport.

Challenges A harmonized approach is required for safeguarding and violence prevention.

Session 3

Health & Wellbeing across Life Stages

Session Moderator

Lilamani de Soysa

Executive Member, IWG



Sarah Zipp PhD

Associate Professor, Mount St. Mary University

 Power to Play, Period

Shifting from a “capture and conceal” approach to increasing awareness about menstrual health. Sarah Zipp PhD has created an educational toolkit to empower coaches and sports leaders to break the taboos surrounding this topic and to inspire girls and women to stay active in sports throughout their lives.

This toolkit provides foundational research to practitioners, guiding policies and support for female athletes. It serves as a resource for coaching education, helping physiotherapists, coaches, and support staff understand how to assist girls in promoting body autonomy.



Jaclyn Hadfield PhD

Assistant Professor Louisiana State University

 Womens Physical Activity Behaviors across the Lifespan

Drawing from her extensive research in behavioral science, Jaclyn Hadfield PhD investigates the messages that women and girls receive at various stages of life, which significantly influence their identification with and relationship to sport and physical activity. Importantly, she highlights a gap in girls’ engagement with sports during childhood, which is high, and women’s desire to return to sports in later adulthood, at a time when health inequalities have already begun to take root.



Session 4

Approaches to Enhance Inclusion and Participation

Session Moderator

Nick Sore

Senior Refugee Sport Coordinator,
UNHCR



Mariella Schweickart

Learn Director, Women Win

Inclusion Beyond Representation

In collaboration with Adidas' Breaking Barriers initiative, Women Win's research aims for deeper systemic change going beyond visibility and numerical equality. It focuses on providing opportunities through policies and practices that organisations can implement to enhance inclusion and foster a sense of belonging for women and girls within the global sports ecosystem.



Sara Massini

General Secretary, ENGSO

Inclusion & Participation

ENGSO, focused on representing grassroots sports at the European level, is researching the implementation of gender equality policies. In partnership with GO, COE, and EPAS, they are examining the impact of data and monitoring on outcomes for gender equality at all levels of sport. Their preliminary findings suggest that while representation at the participatory level is improving, areas such as leadership, coaching, and officiating remain stagnant. This prompts a re-evaluation of strategies to support sports leaders in achieving gender equality goals.



Sungsik Cho

Senior Programme Specialist, UNESCO-ICM

 Towards Inclusive Martial Arts

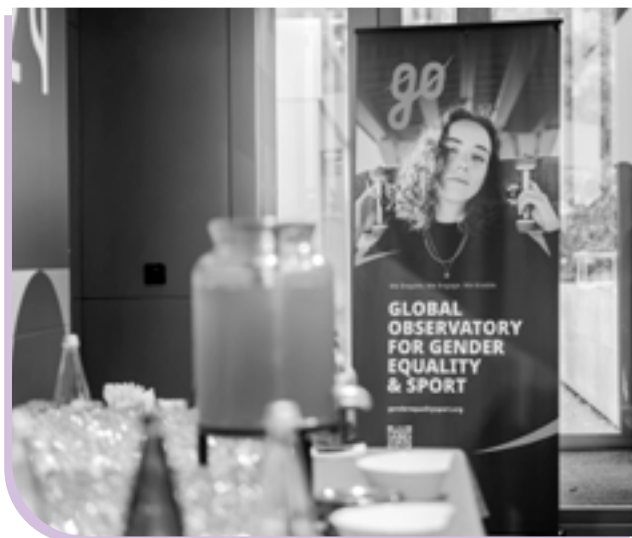
A UNESCO-ICM programme seeking to preserve martial arts as a vital cultural heritage and promote sustainability by including women and non-traditional demographics. It supports newcomers through its online platforms and an in-person Coaches Academy. However, women and girls face barriers due to martial arts being viewed as a male-dominated sport, along with military associations and its contact nature.



Elizaveta Bracht

Executive Director, FIVB Volleyball Foundation

An initiative of the FIVB, the Volleyball Foundation uses volleyball as a vehicle for positive change and is already making a direct impact in communities around the world. Through its support of the Brahmaputra Volleyball League (BVL), the foundation has transformed the lives of thousands of children by providing safer courts with lighting, distributing menstrual products to girls, and offering women and girls alternatives to early marriage, by offering training as coaches.



Session 5

Leveraging Mega Sports Events to Advance Gender Equality

Session Moderator

John Nauright PhD

Director School of Kinesiology,
Louisiana State University



- Panel conversation -



Elsa Arapi

Senior Media Rights
Manager & Project
Lead Women in
Sport, EBU



Doris Keller

Tournament Director,
Women's Euro 2025,
UEFA



Pedro Dias

Gender Equality &
Inclusion Manager, IOC

Key takeaways

A Turning Point Mega events such as the Olympics are milestones, increasing the visibility and viability of women's sports.

Sustainability It's not just a belief, it's a conviction. Younger generations think gender inequalities are unacceptable, and have no place in the future of sports.

Courage Achieving gender equality is not a tickbox exercise; it takes intention and dedica-

tion. Success at the Olympic games can have a positive ripple effect at other levels of the sport.

Cultural Innovation Increasing female representation and the quality of women's sport coverage in media is essential for enhancing visibility. Merging sports with entertainment and culture attracts new audiences.

Accelerating Change Hosting the 2025 Women's Euros in Switzerland will boost women's participation in elite sports.

Conference Insights

Culture emerged as a recurring theme, emphasizing that inequalities between men and women in society are reflected in sports. This signals more work is needed at a cultural level for meaningful progress.

Inclusion transcends numbers and representation, calling for work at a systemic level, alongside a blend of quantitative and qualitative research to identify what all women in their diversity, require to thrive and succeed.

Gender-based violence both physical and digital are rife. We must standardize safeguarding mechanisms to build trust in reporting.

Menstruation and Women's Health A lack of information, support, and facilities regarding menstruation and women's health throughout their life cycle can be a reason for dropping out. To encourage long-term participation and performance among girls and women in PEPAS,

it is essential to increase awareness, education and resources on these topics.

Men serve as crucial allies and stakeholders in changing mindsets. The Volleyball Foundation programme in Assam, India, demonstrates how men's involvement can shift perspectives, positively impacting the lives of women and girls, and their communities.

Dare to change Major sports events can have the power to drive change and leave a lasting legacy, ensuring that sports are sustainable and inclusive for everyone.

From Research to Action Ultimately, the conference highlighted the need for a close, collaborative relationship between research, government, policy makers and the PEPAS ecosystem, to level the playing field for all.



2024 Overpower, Overtake, Overcome Photo Exhibition

Participants had a unique opportunity to explore the Global Observatory's Photo Exhibition, themed "Overpower. Overtake. Overcome." The competition received 130 entries from both professional and amateur photographers worldwide, many of whom are passionate about sports and women's empowerment.

This competition was organized in partnership with Bobbi Brown, UNESCO, UN Women, the Sport for Social Change Network Africa, the

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and the MTV Staying Alive Foundation. Several professional athletes also partnered for the competition, including Zambian international footballer, Rachel Kundananji, and Evelina Cabrera, co-founder of the Argentine Women's Soccer Association (AFFAR).



See Photos from the Collection



Winner

EMBRACING THE HARDSHIP

Photographer
Arpan Basu Chowdhury

Country India



Second place

THE HISTORY MAKERS

Photographer
Paula Duda

Country Poland



Third place

LOST IN THE MOMENT

Photographer
Eragbie Joshua

Country Nigeria

Many thanks to our partners


BOBBI BROWN



Colaborate

Join & Contribute

Explore a dynamic global research hub focused on combating gender inequalities. Become a part of our Expert Contributor Network today, share your expertise, and play a crucial role in empowering women and girls, enhancing their health, and advancing their well-being in the world of sport.

[Join us](#) 

[Contribute](#) 




GO Advisory Council

Advisory Council membership is open to academic institutions, sport associations, governmental agencies, NGOs, and corporate entities around the world therefore bringing diversity, credibility, visibility and universality to the GO.

[Join the GO](#) 

Explore & Share

Enhance your impact and knowledge. Explore and share from the vast collection of research and best practices collated by the GO from around the world.

[Explore & Share](#) 



Glossary

ASOIF • Association of Summer Olympic International Federations

BVL • Brahmaputra Volleyball League

CEDAW • Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

COE • Council of Europe

EBU • European Broadcasting Union

ENGSO • European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation

EPAS • Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport

FIVB • Fédération Internationale de Volleyball

GBV • Gender Based Violence

GO • Global Observatory for Gender Equality & Sport

ICM • International Centre of Martial Arts for Youth Development and Engagement

IOC • International Olympic Committee

IWG • International Working Group on Women & Sport

OHCHR • Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

PEPAS • Physical Education, Physical Activity & Sport

TAFISA • The Association for International Sport For All

UEFA • Union of European Football Associations

UN • United Nations

UNESCO • United Nations Educational Scientific & Cultural Organization

UNIL • University of Lausanne

Acknowledgements

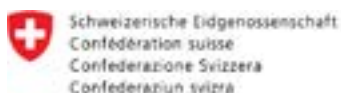
Our thanks to

Conference Participants, Members of the **GO** network and contributing experts and partners.

Special thanks to the **GO** team, supporters and colleagues from the Ville de Lausanne, University of Lausanne and Canton Vaud, who contributed to the development and delivery of the conference.

Alexandra Lammer, Anne-Sophie Nivet,
Bastien Presset, Benjamin Carr,
Carole Gomez, Catherine Wieser,
Claudia Furnari, Cosima Deluermoz,
Fadhel Ben Naceur, Hayley Truskewycz,
Lombe Mwambwa, Lucie Schoch,
Marie Jeanningros, Mélanie Duparc,
Nita Gjokolli, Simon Jordan.

With appreciation to our **partners** whose support is vital to the sustainability of our work





SAVE THE DATE 29 - 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

Join us in Lausanne
on September 29-30, 2025

We can't wait to see you there!



ADDRESS

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