IF Sustainability Project
WOMEN DEVELOPMENT IN WORLD RUGBY
The world faces significant challenges across a wide spectrum of economic, social and environmental matters. The Olympic Movement has both an opportunity and a duty to actively contribute to the global sustainability debate in line with its vision of “Building a better world through sport”.

With this in mind, and in response to Olympic Agenda 2020, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) launched the International Federation (IF) Sustainability Project in 2016 to obtain an overview of IFs’ sustainability initiatives – identifying common topics, challenges and good practices while also sharing information among the IFs.

One outcome of the project was a series of case studies illustrating how IFs are actively contributing towards a more sustainable world.

As part of the IOC’s objective to “profile the role of the Olympic Movement in sustainability through the aggregation of information and collective reporting”, it was agreed that the identification and sharing of information contributes to the holistic integration of sustainability and should be continued. These case studies, which now also showcase National Olympic Committees’ (NOCs) best practices, form part of a strategic support system given to the Olympic Movement through the IOC Sustainability Strategy.

Each case study is aligned with one or more of the IOC’s five sustainability focus areas: infrastructure & natural sites; sourcing & resource management; mobility; workforce; and climate. They are also aligned with one or more of the United Nations’ (UN) framework of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which provide a common framework for organisations to explain how they plan to contribute to sustainable development and tackle the key global sustainability challenges.

This framework is pivotal for the Olympic Movement – in September 2015, the UN General Assembly confirmed the important role that sport can play in supporting the UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs.

“Sport is also an important enabler of sustainable development. We recognise the growing contribution of sport to the realisation of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives.”
Paragraph 37, UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The IOC provides support to NOCs and IFs in the definition, design and development of their sustainability strategies.
WORLD RUGBY SET TO DOUBLE ON FIELD FEMALE REPRESENTATION AND DEVELOP THE PATH TO A GENDER BALANCED LEADERSHIP OF THE SPORT

World Rugby launched its "Accelerating the Global Development of Women in Rugby 2017-2025" development strategy in order to position itself as a global leader in sport where women have equity on and off the field with representation and participation across all levels of rugby by 2025.

The strategy is built around five pillars:

- **Sustainable growth in participation:** continuing successful grassroots programs such as “Get into Rugby” for entry level and the development of coaches, match officials and medical staff to accommodate for this growth and developing toolkits, such as the Women Coaching Rugby Toolkit, to support member federations in growing female participation across the sport.

- **High Performance Quality Competitions:** ensuring the sport can deliver high-quality competitions at every level and across all different formats of the sport with a high entertainment value. The focus is set on both domestic and international competitions.

- **Inspirational Leadership on and off the field:** mandating that World Rugby’s board, committees, working groups and senior management levels should reflect best practices in terms of female representations.

**OBJECTIVES**

World Rugby created its seven-year strategic plan to accelerate development of women in rugby with the goal to:

- Double on-field female participation and develop a sustainable and representative pool of women in coaching, match officials and medical staff.
- Develop and support the creation of high-quality and engaging competitions worldwide.
- Inspire and develop leadership on and off the field.
- Elevate the exposure and positive portrayal of female rugby and its stakeholders.
- Secure the future of the sport with new and diverse revenue streams.
• Profile with Impact Inspiring Engagement: working to attract female viewers and fans through marketing and media initiatives using communication across the board and enhancing the portrayal of women in rugby on all communication platforms.

• Strategic Sustainable Investment Partners: ensuring economic sustainability by focusing on new revenue streams and creating new long-term commercial and non-commercial partnerships to support the development and profitability of women in rugby and maximizing the commercial value of the sport by ensuring broadcasting visibility through all commercial deals.

Its recently revised Balancing the Board toolkit, originally launched in 2017, provides a roadmap to help increase representation on rugby boards on a global scale. The comprehensive toolkit outlines eight steps to go from a current assessment to securing future sustainability in female representation. Furthermore, in order to accelerate leaders in their professional development, the federation launched the Women’s Executive Leadership Scholarship that has supported 37 female leaders since 2018 with an extended 12 to be awarded in 2020.

The strategy has also been supported by the launch of a new “Women in Rugby” brand identity and a global campaign “Try and Stop Us” with the goal to drive increased participation of all female stakeholders of the sport. The campaign was developed in conjunction with national unions and regions and features the stories of 15 women and girls from around the world involved at all levels of the sport that have been faced barriers to participation but show how the sport of rugby has empowered them to overcome those challenges on and off the field.

EVALUATION
World Rugby has set ambitious goals by the end of its strategic cycle and have identified and implemented clear steps to achieve them. At an organizational level a full revision of governance and management seeks to reflect the new standard for best practices with at least one third of women’s representation in its Council. On the field of play, the federation is aiming to at least double the number of registered female players delivering world-class engaging and captivating games. To further fuel the growth, the goal is to increase the involvement of all its stakeholders and secure a diversified investment in women’s game that can ensure and sustain the growth of rugby. Whilst the full impact of the strategy is not yet known, signs of progress in closing the gap are already evident. See more at www.women.rugby.

“FROM THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE SPORT’S GOVERNANCE TO GRASSROOTS PARTICIPATION, WE ARE WHOLLY COMMITTED TO DRIVING GENDER-BALANCE AND ENSURING THAT WOMEN HAVE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES BOTH ON AND OFF THE FIELD, DRIVING INCREASED INVOLVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT IN THE WOMEN’S GAME FROM FANS, AUDIENCES, PLAYERS AND INVESTORS.”
SIR BILL BEAUMONT, WORLD RUGBY CHAIRMAN

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