



Post Series Report

August 2024

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Executive Summary

Grassroots to Global: Women in Rugby Inspiring Change (G2G) is a first-of-its-kind initiative to engage girls and women in community rugby around the world to achieve equity on and off the pitch. Through a series of 22 Forums engaging 26 National Governing Bodies (Unions), 478 female leaders came together to identify shared barriers and enablers to sustainable participation for girls and women, and to develop action plans to grow participation. For 95% of the participants, this was the first time they had attended a leadership forum specifically focused on women. Results from these Forums demonstrate a powerful opportunity for girls and women in grassroots rugby to supercharge the growth of the sport around the world by having their voices incorporated at all levels of the game.

Data collected through these Forums show that the key factors supporting the grassroots participation of women and girls are female leadership, community, and financial investment. The primary drivers keeping girls and women in the game are female coaches and role models, as well as community support.

The main barriers to participation are a lack of financial investment in the women's game, gender discrimination, and a lack of support from the immediate community. The G2G groups developed action plans that closely aligned with these barriers and drivers, with most projects focusing on tackling negative gender stereotypes, promoting role models, sourcing funding, and building community around women's rugby. Representatives from the host Unions reported that as a result of the Forums, they had an increased awareness of the barriers and drivers for women and girls in their country, and that they would be taking action as a result. Some Unions have embraced this opportunity by inviting girls and women into their strategic planning process and embedding G2G initiatives into their plans.

In addition to taking action at the national level in partnership with Unions and other stakeholders, G2G participants developed a global advocacy platform. They call on leaders at all levels of rugby to recognise that, globally, more women must be engaged in coaching, and supported through strong networks at community, national, regional and international levels. Currently, only 8% of coaches globally are women¹. Increasing recruitment and retention of women into coaching is a pivotal action that must be taken to increase participation and retention of girls and women in rugby more broadly. Policymakers should focus on incentivising actions that drive sustainable participation, and ensuring that all rugby environments are safe places for girls and women on and off the pitch.

To harness the incredible potential of girls and women in grassroots rugby, Unions, donors, supporters, and other stakeholders must ensure that their voices are included at all levels, particularly in the following areas:

- **Recruitment** - to develop targeted strategies to bring more girls and women into the game.
- **Retention** - to build holistic strategies to keep girls and women involved for the long term.
- **Strategy** - to embed critical initiatives for girls and women within strategic and annual plans.
- **Leadership** - to fully represent the rugby community and uplift powerful role models.

¹ Data provided by World Rugby during 2022 Women in Rugby Summit.

- **Resource Allocation** - to ensure a gender lens is applied to all budgeting to ensure equitable funding across Union activities that promotes sustainable growth and participation.

By incorporating the voices of girls and women in community rugby, Unions and stakeholders can create an enabling environment that supports both the growth of the sport and advances gender equity. This dual focus ensures that rugby can thrive as a tool for social change while unleashing the transformative potential of the sport around the world.



Grassroots to Global Connect Delegates in New Zealand, ahead of RWC 2021.

Background

Grassroots to Global: Women in Rugby Inspiring Change (G2G) is a women-led initiative that aims to achieve equity in rugby for female players and leaders. The initiative held 22 Forums, with 478 female leaders participating. This report summarises the outcomes of the Grassroots to Global Forums and provides recommendations for building equity in rugby from the grassroots up to complement ongoing top down initiatives.

Background

Community sport is often the first step for individuals on their sporting journey and underpins the sporting world. In the past 3 years, inequity has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges facing women delivering and participating in community sport have grown.² Despite often being the most affected by these equity challenges, women working and participating at the grassroots level often do not have their voices heard in decision making.

Women participating and leading at the grassroots level are critical agents for change and the gateway for many more women and girls (and boys and men) to starting their own sporting journey. Grassroots to

² Zarrett, N., and Veliz, P. T. (2023). The Healing Power of Sport: COVID-19 and Girls' Participation, Health, and Achievement. Women's Sports Foundation.

Global has created important connections for a global group of inspirational women, and provided a platform for their voices to influence decision making towards a more equitable rugby future.

The Forums

Forums followed a standard agenda, supporting participants to jointly identify: i) key barriers they faced in accessing the game; ii) the drivers that supported them on their leadership journeys in rugby, and iii) strategies to explore to improve equity for future generations.

Each G2G Forum resulted in:

1. A list of the most significant barriers women and girls faced in their country/community.
2. A list of the most significant drivers supporting women and girls on their leadership journeys in rugby.
3. An action plan for how the Forum participants could tackle one of these barriers or promote a driver to improve equity for women and girls on and off the field.

These Forums also provided the opportunity to connect women leaders in grassroots rugby, spark conversations about change, and provide safe and inclusive spaces for individuals to share their experiences.

The Unions

Forums were hosted by National Governing Bodies (Unions) that received technical support and a small grant from ChildFund Rugby. Forums were hosted in person or online where there were restrictions stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Data Collection and Reporting

The key barriers and drivers identified by the G2G participants, along with the action plans they developed, were collected for all Forums. Participants also completed surveys before and after attending their Forum and Union representatives submitted post-Forum reports to ChildFund Rugby. Data from these surveys and reports were analysed to form the contents of this report and the foundation for recommendations for the future.

Results

Barriers and Drivers

The aim of each G2G Forum was to create clear actions for equitable leadership and participation in rugby. Participants were tasked with building understanding of the different barriers and drivers they faced, and using this understanding, create actions. Identifying these barriers and drivers pushed participants to think beyond their personal experience, to also include women and girls they had played with or worked alongside. The process highlighted common experiences, recognising that often these issues were systemic and had significantly impacted the journeys of women and girls across the sport.

Forums all followed a similar structure to support participants to identify barriers and drivers. This included a leadership map allowing participants to identify key moments on their personal journeys including obstacles that blocked their path (barriers), a challenge that changed their direction,

opponents who tried to stop them on their path, skills or capabilities they learned to make the journey easier, and people who have supported them along their path.

Participants presented these maps to other participants and they formed the foundation of discussion and further activities. In each Forum, participants identified many barriers and drivers individually, then collectively agreed on the top 10 barriers and top 10 drivers, and ranked them in order of impact. Although this consolidation process created priorities, it was recognised that all of the barriers and drivers were significant to participants and women and girls in their community.



A Grassroots to Global forum in hosted by Brasil Rugby.

Barriers

Each Forum generated a list of the top 10 barriers which were submitted to ChildFund Rugby and analysed to identify the trends and themes from across the world. The top three barriers identified were: i) a lack of finances or investment into the women's game; ii) gender discrimination and negative stereotypes of women and girls, or mistreatment because of gender in rugby, and iii) no or poor close community support from family, teachers, or partners.

Barriers identified across the different Grassroots to Global Forums are below, ranked according to the frequency of each response:

| Rank | Barrier |
|------|--|
| 1 | Lack of finances / investment in the women's game. |
| 2 | Gender discrimination / negative stereotypes of women and girls. |
| 3 | No/poor close community support (family, teachers, partners). |
| 4 | Lack of opportunities for women and girls (e.g. competitions, travel, training). |
| 5 | Pressure to balance other commitments. |
| 6 | Fear of injury (player or family). |
| 7 | Lack of communication about women's rugby. |
| 8 | Lack of resources (e.g. human resources, equipment, facilities). |
| 9 | COVID-19. |
| 10 | Rugby not popular in the country (limited awareness). |

Examples of the specific points made by participants about barriers are below:

- “Difficulty with time management between rugby and work/social life.”
- “Financial issues - funding for transportation, equipment, and meals.”
- “Lack of publication of women's games.”
- “Few women in decision-making spaces.”
- “Lack of communication or media coverage.”
- “Negative attitudes towards girls/women in rugby due to conscious and unconscious gender bias/sexism in sport.”

Drivers

Drivers were defined as the people, opportunities or skills that supported participants on their leadership journey or that would have helped other women they know who left leadership opportunities, to remain involved. Drivers were powerful and more positive to discuss than barriers. They were also recognised as having the potential to make a marked shift in a participant's leadership journey.

The reciprocal relationship between barriers and drivers was clear, and drivers were often recognised as the solution or potential solution to identified barriers. Forum hosts were therefore encouraged to focus on barriers to form the foundation of action plans, but to use drivers as a potential source for solutions in these plans. This provided a solution-oriented approach, which was useful when pitching action plans to external stakeholders for support.

Each Forum generated a list of the top 10 drivers, which were consolidated to identify key themes across the Forums. The top biggest drivers globally were: i) female coaches/sports teachers; ii) support from close community, and iii) female role models.

Drivers identified from across the different Grassroots to Global Forums are below, ranked according to the frequency of each response:

| Rank | Driver |
|------|--|
| 1 | Positive (and often female) Coaches/sports teachers. |
| 2 | Support from close community (family, parents, partners). |
| 3 | Female role models. |
| 4 | New opportunities as a result of taking part in rugby. |
| 5 | Support from friends and teammates. |
| 6 | Celebrating/sharing passion and love for the sport with other women and girls. |
| 7 | Financial investment and getting paid to work/play in rugby. |
| 8 | Engagement and support from community/society (often men/male rugby players). |
| 9 | Positive media coverage and recognition of success. |
| 10 | Support with/promotion of good mental health. |

Samples of the specific points made by participants about drivers are below:

- “Having more job opportunities as a result of rugby.”
- “Inspirational peers and coaches.”
- “Mentors/educators to train more female coaches, players, and other rugby personnel.”
- “Having supportive and knowledgeable coaches.”
- “Positive family relationships and attitudes towards girls and women’s rugby.”
- “Inspiration from international rugby players and local sports administrators.”

Action Plans

Participants of each Forum designed action plans to address the barriers or promote the drivers they identified. Action plans were designed collectively in the format of a project proposal that could be used to seek funding and present to external stakeholders. These actions plans were based on one key barrier or driver selected from a consolidated list. The aim of this was to provide an opportunity for action and to support the groups to recognise their own ‘change maker possibility’ status.

Considering the systemic nature of many of the barriers, it was challenging to identify which barrier could be feasibly tackled as a collective, so participants mapped them out by feasibility and influence. This exercise helped participants to better understand the realm of influence they held in order to action change. For example, one of the biggest barriers in all locations was a lack of financial investment. In some Forums, participants recognised that they could deliver events to generate sponsorship, while in other Forums, they recognised that funding and sponsorship was managed by the Union directly and was therefore not something they could easily impact.

This approach encouraged participants to be realistic about how they engaged with actions and supported them to develop proposals with clear achievable goals, to ensure making a small start was possible.



A Grassroots to Global forum in hosted by Boswana Rugby.

Key Themes

After being created, action plans and project proposals were submitted to ChildFund Rugby. The action plans submitted covered a range of key themes. The most common themes are listed below, ranked according to frequency of occurrence.

| Rank | Theme |
|------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Tackling negative gender stereotypes |
| 2 | Promoting role models |
| 3 | Building community |
| 4 | Sourcing funding |
| 5 | Growing networks |
| 6 | Increasing self-confidence |

Tackling Negative Gender Stereotypes

Action plans focused on tackling stereotypes were the most common globally, with action plans including:

“Demonstrate the benefits of playing rugby to the parents of 50 girls (7 to 18 years old) in Mexico City, through interactive fairs in collaboration with schools. 15% of the girls who attend the fair will sign up for a club or attend training. At the end of the exhibition match, there will be a question-and-answer session with coaches and team captains to address doubts and concerns that parents and daughters may have. Team captains will also share a testimonial describing the benefits of rugby in their lives.”

Mexico

“To improve understanding and receive recognition for women’s rugby, we are seeking to begin a united social media campaign leading up to and during our upcoming season. This campaign will appear in the form of articles and social media takeovers and seeks to highlight females in all parts of rugby (players, administrators, coaches and match officials). We will achieve this campaign objective by asking clubs for support and creating an Instagram channel before the season to gain momentum throughout the season.”

Australia

Promoting Role Models

Promoting role models appeared in 20% of action plans and was the second most common focus. This included actions such as:

“We will empower and equip 15 women with rugby knowledge and skills to be trainers in coaching, refereeing and administration, in order to increase female participation and leadership in rugby in Plumtree, Beitbridge, and Mutare by April 2024.”

Zimbabwe

“One woman referee educator will lead trainings with the local referees during the tournament at the end of our rugby camp. That way, this project will not only support female players, but also female referees.”

Türkiye

Sourcing Funding

Sourcing funding was an important theme for action plans including:

“We will write sponsorship/support request proposals to highlight the importance of two upcoming women’s rugby events to raise KES 1.5 million by May 2024 to fund the following: 1. French Embassy; 2. A minimum of two local companies; 3. Kenya Rugby Union; 4. World Rugby,”

Kenya

Building Community

The importance of a supportive community was clear in both the barriers and drivers in a number of countries. Building these communities was therefore something participants felt they could do to increase support, for example:

“Approach 30 sports organisations (schools, universities, clubs, academies) in Cairo and 15 in Alexandria with a presentation to encourage them create a rugby team in their organisation within 4 months.”

Egypt

Growing Networks

Building networks also came through, often as an essential step to either build influence or get closer to potential funding opportunities:

“To increase the resources available to women’s rugby in Barbados by holding 3 camps for children aged 18 and under throughout the year of 2023, concluding with an exhibition match for potential sponsors at each respective camp, resulting in the formation of mutually beneficial relationships with the above mentioned sponsors.”

Barbados

Increasing Women’s Self Confidence

A number of action plans and project proposals included key activities to promote the self-confidence of women already involved in rugby to take on leadership roles, or women outside of rugby who could be encouraged to start:

“We will host a player safety forum for 40 girls interested in contact rugby which results in a minimum of 20 girls joining a contact team and develop a recovery action plan for players who are injured in the 2023 season.”

Trinidad and Tobago

Union Impact

Unions hosting Forums had an essential role to play in facilitation but were also key in actioning change. The majority of Unions had never hosted a women’s leadership forum before, and none had hosted one focused on women leaders at the grassroots level. Unions were therefore able to learn from the participants, understand their role in action, and in some cases, incorporate the voices of participants into their strategic plans.

Union representatives were asked to report back to ChildFund Rugby after hosting a Forum and reflect on their learnings. Representatives from 16 Unions have provided these reflections to date. The most common themes from their responses are highlighted below:

| Rank | Theme |
|------|---|
| 1 | Increased awareness of barriers and drivers to participation for women and girls. |
| 2 | Taking actions/changing plans as a result. |
| 3 | Recognising the benefit of bringing girls and women together. |
| 4 | Recognising the Union's role in driving change. |

Increased Awareness

Across all reflections from Union representatives, increased awareness as a result of hosting the Forum was regularly cited. This included confirming understandings of the barriers women and girls face in their communities, discovering something new about barriers or drivers facing women and girls, and better recognising the significance of barriers on participation and development of the game.

Examples of this included:

“We are a developing country and families here are so conservative. After marriage, men rarely support their wives to play sports. Through the Forum, one of our participants shared that her husband supports her more than her own family. That was really surprising and optimistic.”

Bangladesh

“We knew some of the barriers but we were surprised at the strong agreement on the one essential barrier, which is lack of funding. The girls know that it is a huge problem for most, but they agreed that it is worse in Syria due to the war and its effects during recent years. When the girls discussed barriers, they mentioned destroyed facilities, economic crisis, and negative emotional effects. All of these are the consequences of war, which pushed sport backwards in Syria.”

Syria

“The first two barriers, lack of female players and lack of financial resources, were already visible for us and we have been working to fight them. Gender stereotypes, lack of family support and caregiving tasks are barriers that after being mentioned seem obvious, but we had not worked specifically before to combat them. These insights are very useful because our communications and efforts can be more focused now.”

Mexico

“The interesting point was, the immediate families of all the girls support their rugby career, whereas their other relatives oppose it. Knowing the barriers girls and women face in rugby allows our Union to take the necessary steps to remove those barriers which will help grow women's rugby in Türkiye.”

Türkiye

Taking Action / Changing Plans as a Result

Union reflections also regularly acknowledged that action or strategic plans would change as a result of what they had learned from hosting the Forum, or to complement action plans the participants had developed. For example:

“Also, as an impact of the Forum we have already started distributing rugby balls to the 7 provinces... [And] as the Union we will definitely be addressing the obstacles in promoting women’s rugby using these drivers while organising projects to develop the women’s rugby community in Sri Lanka”

Sri Lanka

“The Union is not aware of all the drivers in women’s rugby; however, this Forum has made them aware of the most common ones women are experiencing. In the future, now armed with the knowledge of the drivers for women and girls in rugby, the Union aims to ensure that these are addressed. This would have an overall positive impact on girls and women’s rugby locally.”

Barbados

“Many of the barriers that emerged from the Forum were consistent with the TTRU’s understanding of the barriers facing girls and women in the rugby community. Lack of support from family, access to the sport for disabled people, as well as lack of support from family, parents, and self-doubt are four barriers that, while not necessarily new or surprising, were not in the immediate forefront of the Union’s focus. The Union is now tasked with considering these factors in its strategic planning and goals for growing and developing rugby.”

Trinidad and Tobago

Recognising the Benefits of Bringing Women Together

In reflections, some Union representatives specifically highlighted the benefits of bringing women together in a format like the Grassroots to Global Forum. This indicates that some Unions would be likely to host events like this in the future. For example:

“This has been a great opportunity to empower community leaders; to make sure they feel appreciated and that their work has an impact. This Forum was useful for them to build and strengthen their rugby network. Listening to their peers’ experiences can be very powerful and build a sense of community.”

Mexico

“It was humbling to witness a sense of gratitude from the participants, appreciating an opportunity from Grassroots to Global to be heard, something that has not been done within the Union before.”

Botswana

Recognising the Union's Role in Driving Change

Some Union representatives recognised their role in driving change and the opportunities to do more to support equity for women on and off the field. For example:

“This Forum gave us the opportunity to identify new role models which is an important thing for young girls in our country, because they need a good example to follow, someone who has been through challenges and was able to overcome, someone to guide them.”

Syria

“The Union can dedicate more resources to women's rugby so that they can feel more included overall, which should have a positive outcome for girls and women.”

Barbados

Participant Impact

Participants of Grassroots to Global took part in an anonymous survey before and after the Forum in each location to better understand the background of the participants involved, and if taking part in a Forum changed their perspective of leadership, connection, mentorship, energy and networks.

Feedback from participants highlighted that the vast majority enjoyed the experience and felt more valued as a result. When participants were asked to describe their experience, it was overwhelmingly positive, and over 75% of participants stated they would strongly recommend participating in the Forum to someone they know.

Participants were also asked a series of questions before and after the Forum to understand if participating in the Forum had an impact on women leaders in key areas: leadership perception, connection and networks and feeling energised. These questions followed a standard agree – disagree scale to provide comparison.

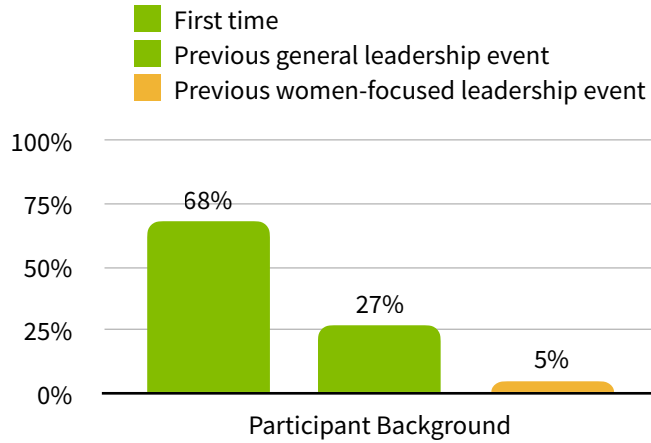
Participant Background

Participants who attended Grassroots to Global Forums had most commonly been involved in grassroots sport for 3-10 years. Less than 10% of participants had been involved for over ten years, which matches the relative infancy of rugby in some participating countries.

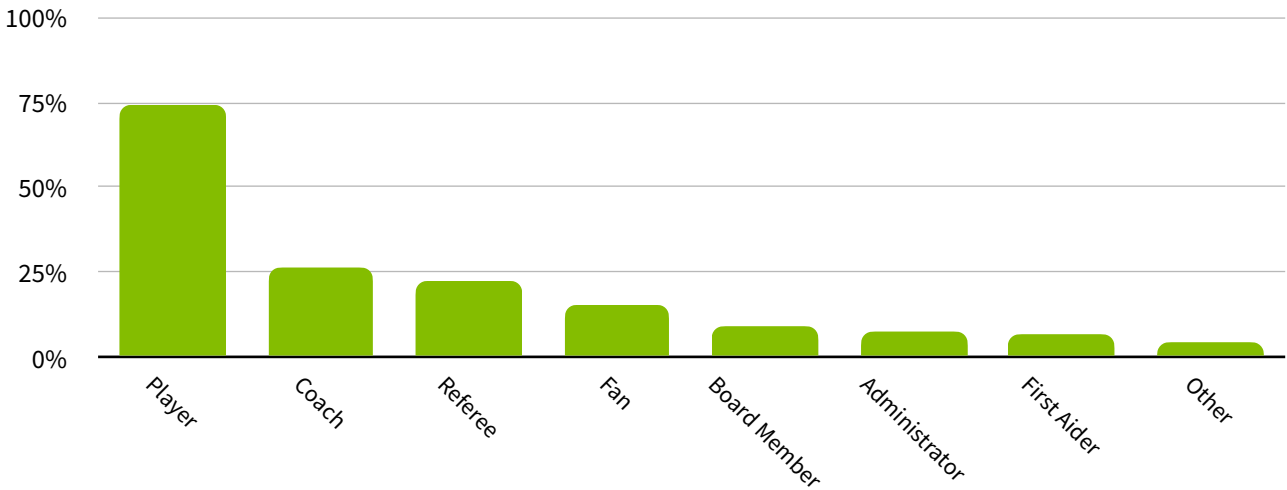
Only 5% of participants from around the world had previously attended a women's leadership forum. Although some had attended a leadership forum before, this was the first for the vast majority which focused specifically on women.

The majority of participants attending were players (74%) followed by coaches (27%). Notably, over 40% of participants selected more than one leadership role, highlighting that a significant number of participants hold multiple leadership positions in their community sports environments.

Participant Background



Role Participants Hold in their Communities



Forum Experience

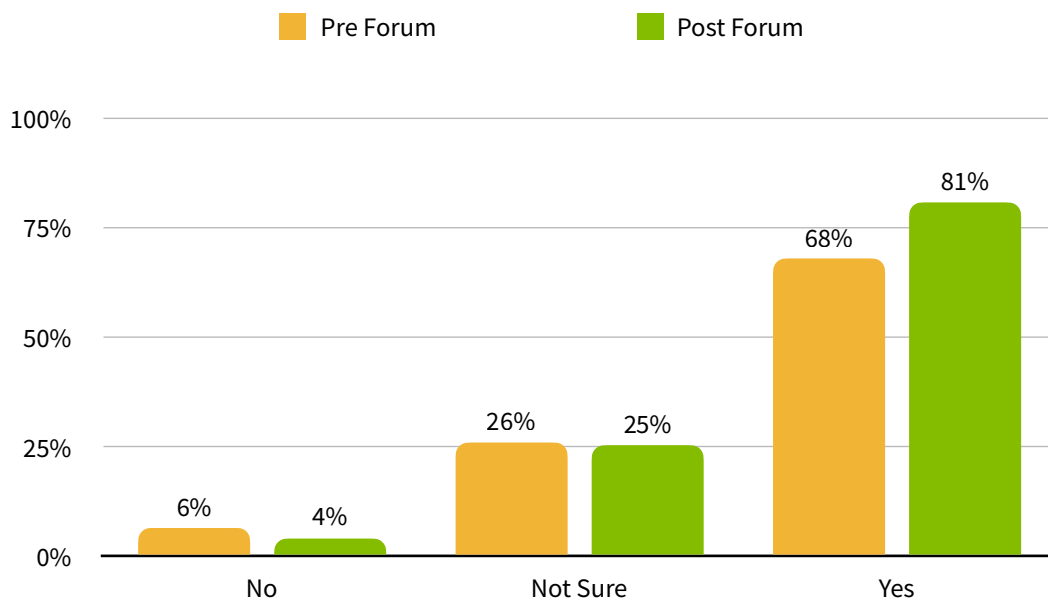
Overall, Grassroots to Global participants reported that the Forum was a positive experience for them. In surveys, 78% of participants reported that they would actively promote participating in a Grassroots to Global Forum to someone they knew. In addition, when asked to describe their experience in three words, almost all responses were positive. The word cloud to the right highlights the most common words participants submitted, with size of word denoting incidence.



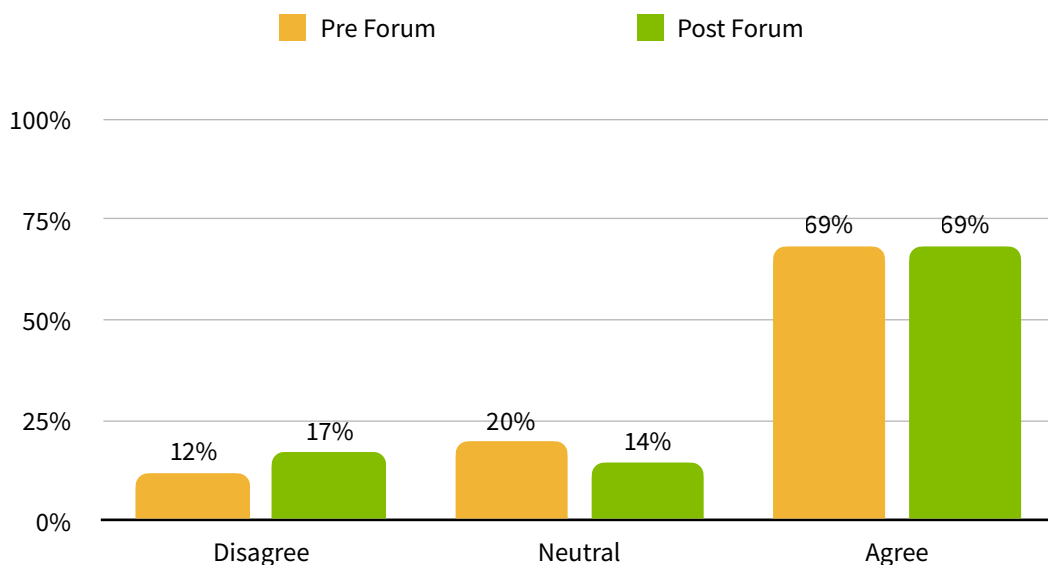
Leadership Perception

There was a positive shift in the percentage of participants who consider themselves to be a leader in community sport after attending the Forum, highlighting the positive impact on participants' self-confidence around their role in community sport. In contrast, there were mixed results from a question about whether participants are role models for young women and girls. This result may highlight the increased awareness, but diverse interpretations of, the finding that a lack of female role models is a significant barrier for women and girls in community sport.

I consider myself a leader in community sport



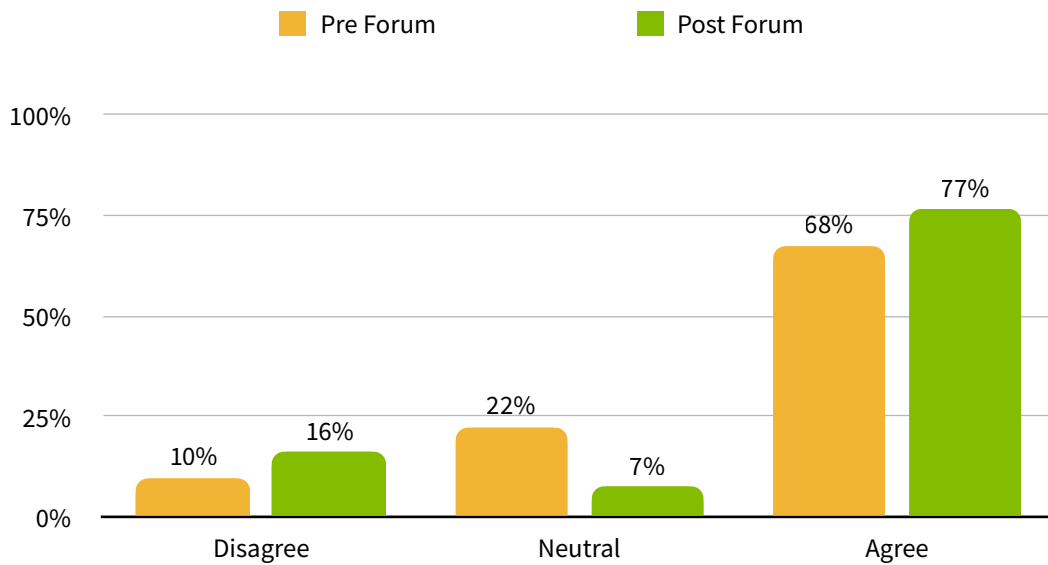
I am a mentor and/or role model to young women and girls in my community



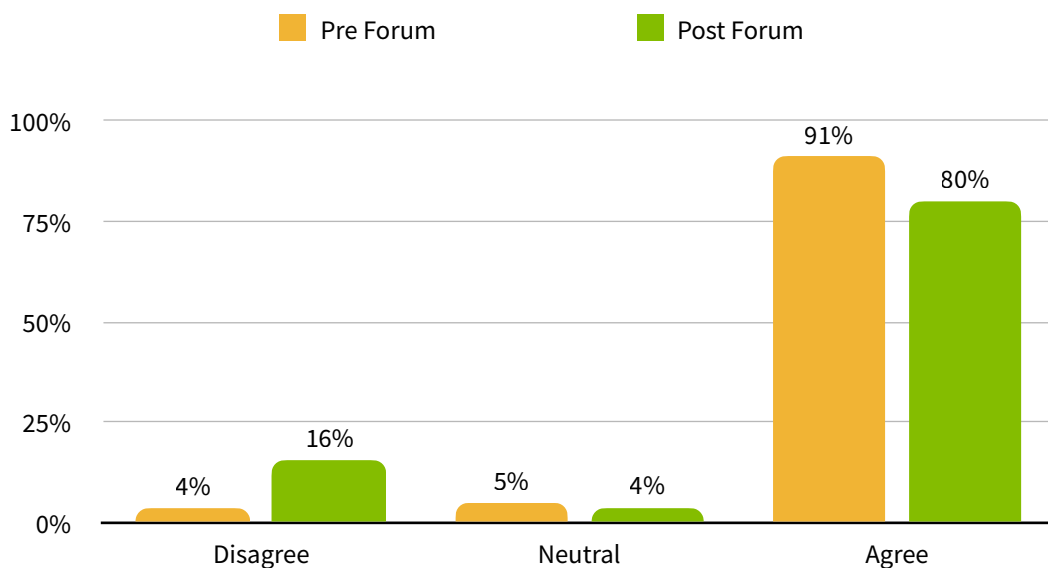
Connections and Networks

Questions about connections and networks produced mixed results. Overall, more participants shifted towards positive responses when asked about whether they have valuable connections with other women in community sport, potentially highlighting the networks they built through the Forum. However, participants reported less optimism about the benefits of networks to support them in their sport or community. This result suggests that while participants built stronger networks through the Forums, they also gained a deeper understanding of the structural barriers women and girls face, which connections alone may not be sufficient to address.

I have valuable connections with other women working in community sport



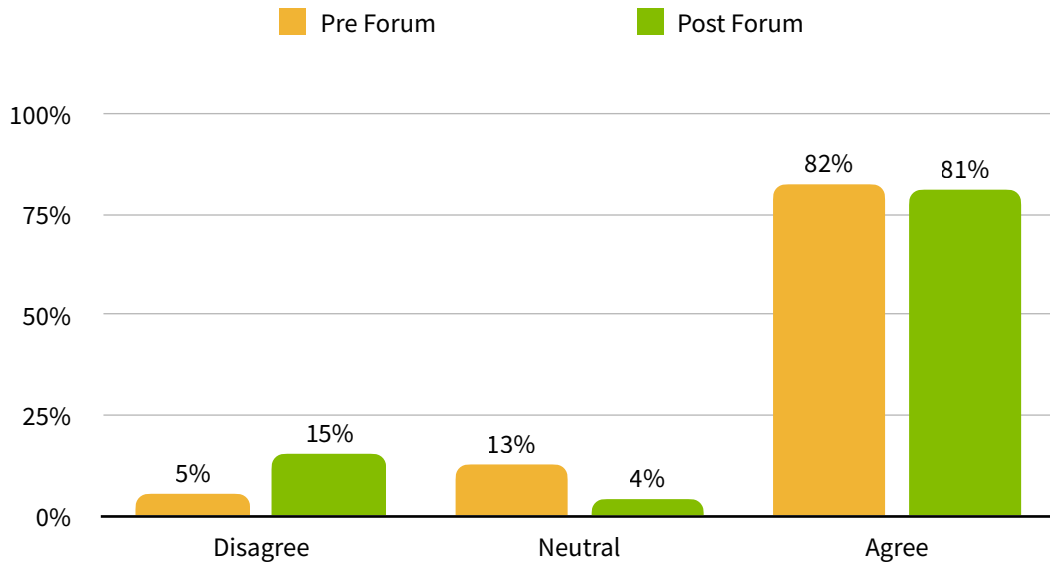
Access to women's leadership networks will help me support my sport/community



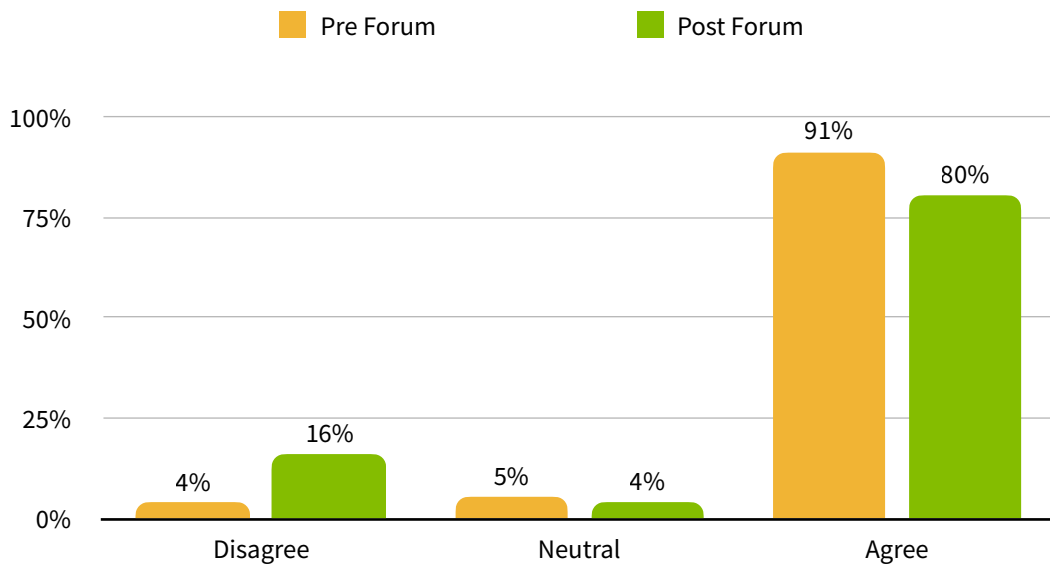
Feeling Energised and Equipped to Create Change

Overall, participants reported feeling less energized by their work in community sport and less equipped to build an equitable future for the next generation. These results could reflect a more nuanced understanding of how communities are placed with regard to gender equity and equality after reflecting on barriers to progress, as well as the limitations of impact that can be achieved from a two-day Forum.

I am energised by my work in community sport



I am equipped to build an equitable future for the next generation of women in community sport



Case Studies

Spotlight on Community Action: Mothers in Rugby Project in Vietnam

During the Grassroots to Global Forum in Vietnam, participants identified that a key barrier preventing girls and women from participating in rugby is the stereotype that it's not appropriate for mothers to play rugby. As a result, once women start families, they are less likely to start or continue participation in rugby.

To address this barrier, the Grassroots to Global group developed the Mothers in Rugby project which focused on bringing mothers and grandmothers out to play to teach them about rugby with the aim that they would become stronger advocates for their daughters and granddaughters playing the sport. This league was implemented in the districts of Kim Boi and Tan Lac in Vietnam, with over 80 mothers and grandmothers participating.

To measure the impact of this action, they conducted surveys with the mothers and grandmothers after they participated in the tag rugby league. Their findings showed that 71% of participating mothers and grandmothers across the two districts created new peer support networks and engaged with their daughters to promote and support their participation in tag rugby and life skills learning.



Grassroots to Global participants from Viet Nam.

Spotlight on Union Engagement: The Women's Rugby Revival in Tunisia

The Grassroots to Global Forum was the first opportunity for women's rugby leaders in Tunisia to get together since the pandemic and the Forum was described as a “revival”. Forum leaders and participants stated that the diversity of the participants in the Forum helped build a strong network across the women's rugby community.

Following the Forum, Tunisia Rugby's board invited G2G participants to share their findings and outcomes from the report in the new Tunisia Rugby strategic planning process with the aim of incorporating some of the key findings and opportunities into the Union strategic plan. G2G leaders shared the barriers and drivers and project proposal with the board during the strategic planning process.

Union representative Maha Zaoui, who also holds the role of Women's Rugby Manager for Rugby Africa, reported that the Forum outcomes highlighted the need for greater investment, promotion, and visibility of women's rugby in Tunisia and Africa. She has now sought additional opportunities to build on the momentum of this Forum by hosting additional forums uniting African Unions to share their barriers and bring alignment to some of the challenges experienced in the region, with the aim of increasing momentum and support for national projects. Zaoui reflected that “if women's rugby gains more visibility and awareness, it will become more accepted as a sport, which can help attract more players, fans, and support from stakeholders. The Forum highlighted the need for greater investment in women's rugby both in terms of financial resources and human capital. This could lead the Union to focus on recruiting and training more female coaches, referees, and administrators, as well as increasing funding for women's rugby programmes.”

Spotlight on Building Networks: Project Nina in Brazil

Prior to hosting their Grassroots to Global Forum, the Brazilian Confederation of Rugby had previously established Project Nina, which focused on leadership development through the empowerment of girls and women, using rugby as a tool. The Forum offered the first chance for those girls and women leaders to come together in person to advance the Confederation's strategic goals for Project Nina.

Through the Forum, the participants developed a project to serve five regions of the country and impact around 200 women and girls in grassroots rugby. In post-Forum reporting, Union representatives stated that they have already noticed a change in the way clubs participating in the project think about women's rugby, as well as by others in the rugby community, with concerns that go beyond technical sport to also consider women's physical and mental health, and create safe spaces for them to develop.

In the post-Forum report, the Union representative noted “the discussions held during the Forum brought much reflection and encouragement to all the women present. Now they feel that even though they are physically distant from each other, they are united by a shared purpose - to provide more women the opportunity to play and develop in all aspects of rugby, on and off the field.”



Brasil Rugby's Grassroots to Global participants.

Looking Forward

Grassroots to Global Connect: A Global Call to Action

In November 2022, Grassroots to Global Connect brought together participants who were nominated as leaders by their respective Grassroots to Global Forums for a special summit during the final rounds of the Rugby World Cup in Auckland, New Zealand. Delegates representing 13 countries reviewed the data from the country-level Forums and identified shared barriers and enablers to sustainable participation for girls and women. They developed an advocacy platform based on the findings from the Grassroots to Global Forums.

In order to capitalise on the growth opportunity in women's rugby, the leaders generated a global call to action: **more women must be engaged in coaching and supported through strong networks.** Currently, only 8% of Coaches globally are women, and getting more girls and women into coaching is one of the most effective actions that can be taken globally to increase participation and retention of girls and women in rugby. Key stakeholders must be engaged and take action to increase recruitment and retention of women in coaching at the community level.

Two complementary areas of advocacy were identified to support this global call:

- Actions that drive sustainable participation for girls and women should be incentivised through policies and supported by key stakeholders to ensure accountability.
- All rugby environments must be safe places for girls and women on and off the pitch, as ensured by policy, procedures and action.

As Grassroots to Global groups and Unions continue to take action at the national level, Grassroots to Global participants are also advocating globally to bring their call to action to stakeholders at every level of the game.

Recommendations for the Rugby Community

The Grassroots to Global initiative has demonstrated the power of bringing together women in grassroots rugby to strengthen the broader rugby network. Girls and women at the community level can supercharge rugby around the world by being included at all levels, particularly in the following areas:

- Recruitment - to develop targeted strategies to bring more girls and women into the game
- Retention - to build holistic strategies to keep girls and women involved for the long term
- Strategy - to embed critical initiatives for girls and women within strategic and annual plans
- Leadership - to fully represent the rugby community and uplift powerful role models
- Financing - to apply a gender lens to budgeting and resource allocation, ensuring investments support equal opportunities for girls and women in rugby, from grassroots to leadership roles.




By incorporating the voices of girls and women in community rugby, Unions and stakeholders can create an enabling environment for the rugby community to thrive and unleash the potential of the sport around the world.



Rugby Australia's Grassroots to Global participants.

Annex 1 - Participating Unions

| | Union | Forum Held | Project Proposal Generated | Project Implemented | Project Evaluated |
|--|--|------------|----------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
|  | Lao Rugby Federation | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
|  | Cambodia Federation of Rugby | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
|  | Philippines Rugby Football Union | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
|  | Kim Boi and Tan Lac Rugby Associations | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
|  | Nepal Rugby Association | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
|  | Syria Rugby High Commission | ✓ | ✓ | | |
|  | Sri Lanka Rugby Union | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
|  | Türkiye Ragbi Federasyonu | ✓ | ✓ | | |
|  | Kenya Rugby Union | ✓ | ✓ | | |
|  | Bangladesh Rugby Football Union | ✓ | ✓ | | |
|     | Oceania Rugby | ✓ | ✓ | | |
|  | Deutscher Rugby-Verband | ✓ | | | |
|  | Rugby Australia | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
|  | Zimbabwe Rugby Union | ✓ | ✓ | | |
|  | Confederação Brasileira de Rugby | ✓ | ✓ | | |
|  | Federación Mexicana de Rugby | ✓ | ✓ | | |
|  | USA Rugby | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
|  | Egypt Rugby | ✓ | ✓ | | |
|  | Tunisia Rugby | ✓ | ✓ | | |

| | Union | Forum Held | Project Proposal Generated | Project Implemented | Project Evaluated |
|---|---------------------------------|------------|----------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
|  | Botswana Rugby Union | ✓ | ✓ | | |
|  | Trinidad and Tobago Rugby Union | ✓ | ✓ | | |
|  | Barbados Rugby Football Union | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |