

NGBs as 'Pathway Innovators' redesigning talent programmes to create more inclusive and accessible pathways for women and girls in sport

Sport England's c£700 million investment over 5-years into its partner organisations (called System Partners). The investment aims to reshape the sector and support the ambitions of its 10-year strategy, Uniting the Movement (UTM). The strategy seeks to improve Sport and Physical Activity (SPA) levels and reduce inequalities, whilst ensuring safe and positive experiences for children and young people. This diagram visually represents the story of System Partners' journeys since the beginning of the investment, based on data collected from several System Partners.



CONTEXT AND CONSIDERATIONS



A changing social narrative around women's sport, boosted by the success of national teams and major events.

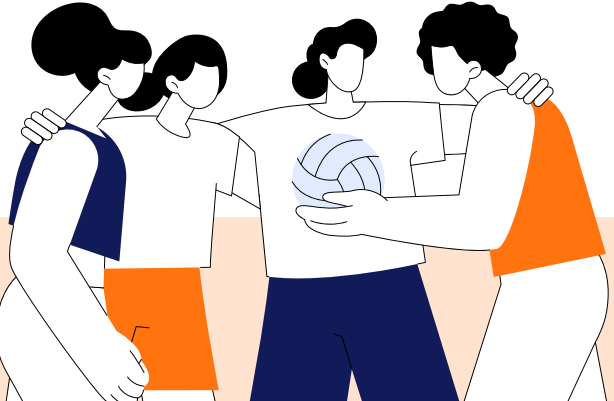
There is recognition within NGBs of the need to challenge and change long-standing male-dominated structures, processes, and cultural perceptions that have historically created barriers for women and girls participating in sport and physical activity.

- Other influential factors**
- The visibility of national teams creates positive role models and a supportive public narrative unlocking additional resources for these programmes.
 - Different sports encounter different barriers about whether certain sports are "for girls".

Innovations along talent pathways are affected by a lack of viable professional career opportunities in many women's sports, which mean that women often have to balance elite training with full-time work, which can harm retention.

Access to facilities and opportunities can be limited by geographic location.

To create a more inclusive environment and local role models, there is a need to upskill the workforce and increase opportunities for female coaches and coaches from diverse backgrounds.



SP INVESTMENT



Strategic, ring-fenced, and long-term investment from Sport England provides the financial security to experiment with new approaches and commit to long-term change programmes.

Investment in staff provide dedicated capacity for NGBs to develop networks and partner with community-based organisations to enhance their reach and understanding.

MECHANISM(S) OF CHANGE

Strategically allocating resources into women's and girls' programmes, such as funding for coach training.

Practical support, including hardship funds, providing kit, and travel costs, introduced to reduce financial barriers to participation.

Internal champions progressing organisational change and leading innovative ways of working.

New pathways are being designed (and existing processes redesigned) in collaboration with parents, participants, and community partners to ensure they are effective and fit for purpose.

SHORT TERM OUTCOME



For communities and the system: increased resources and coaching support being redirected to the women's game.

For NGBs: new pathways for women and girls have been created, leading to increased diversity in talent pipelines and greater investment in staff and coaches to lead this change.