



WFSGI Convenes Sport and Industry Leaders in New York to Advance Youth Participation Legacy from Major Sporting Events

The One Goal. Move the World. gathering explores how stakeholders of major sporting events can collaborate to deliver greater lasting physical and mental health benefits for young people and communities.

New York, 25 June 2026 - The World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry (WFSGI) yesterday brought together leaders from sport, public health, civil society and the global sporting goods industry for an event at adidas in New York City. Hosted during the FIFA World Cup 2026, the event explored a shared ambition: how can the stakeholders of major sporting events deepen collaboration to leave a lasting impact on physical activity, particularly for local children and young people?

Spain, Manchester United and Chelsea football legend and Common Goal supporter, Juan Mata, kicked off the event calling on teamwork from all stakeholders in the room to keep young people active and engaged in sport. *“One of the first lessons I learned in football is that it takes a team to accomplish your dreams. We live by this mantra on the pitch, yet we don’t see it enough in the social space. It’s not the sole responsibility of one organisation, one rights holder, one government, or one community to grow participation and create a lifelong love of football or any other sport. It’s up to all sports stakeholders to come together and help kids everywhere experience that same light and joy that I’ve enjoyed as footballer.”*

The One Goal. Move the World. advocacy event, is supported by leading WFSGI member brands including adidas, Amer Sports, Arena, ASICS, Brooks, Decathlon, New Balance, Nike, Oakley, Specialized and Under Armour. It convened rights-holders, host cities, NGOs, foundations, UN agencies and industry leaders to share evidence-based insights and strategies for successfully collaborating to embed participation legacy into the design and delivery of mega-events.

The event is inspired by the 2024 World Health Organisation (WHO)’s Resolution Strengthening Health and Well-being through Sport Events (WHA77.12) and real-world delivery experience from organisations working at the community level across the globe.

A shared opportunity for sport and for young people

With 81% of teenagers globally not meeting the WHO’s basic physical activity guidelines, and the sporting goods industry unique positioning to help turn sporting moments into lasting



habits, WFSGI convened this gathering to focus on what works - and how the industry can play a more active role in making it happen.

Dave Wheeler, COO of New Balance and WFSGI Co-Chair, opened the event by setting out the industry's commitment to moving beyond inspiration to real-world impact for young people. According to Wheeler, *"The FIFA World Cup reminds us of sport's extraordinary power to unite, inspire, and move the world. As a sporting goods industry, we help make sport possible — through the products athletes rely on, the innovation that improves performance, and the partnerships that support programs, coaches, clubs, and communities. But our greatest impact is not only in what we make; it's in how we help more young people experience the confidence, connection, and opportunity that sport can provide. Events like this are where we turn inspiration into action — and build a legacy that begins long before the final whistle."*

Emma Zwiebler, WFSGI CEO, continued *"As the industry that moves the world, sporting goods has a unique role to play thanks to our global reach, cultural influence and passion to support people to be physically active. But this is bigger than any one brand, organisation, or industry. Today is about bringing together the vast range of actors who are critical to fulfil major sport event legacy ambitions, sharing what works and what doesn't, and making sure the momentum and learnings of this World Cup reaches future event organisers. By working together, we can deliver for the young people and communities that need it most."*

From moment to movement

The first panel, ***From Moment to Movement: Why Participation Legacy Must Start at Event Design***, explored why and how to embed youth participation into the planning of major sporting events from the outset. Discussion was led by Brianna Keys (Director of Social Impact, FIFA Host City NYC/NJ), Brian Flinn (SVP Global Flag Football, NFL), Jennifer Gray (Regional Partnership Manager, World Rugby), Renata Simril (CEO, LA84 Foundation), Maya Stephen (Partnerships Manager, Soccer Forward) and Katie Hanna (Head of North America, Centre for Sport and Human Rights), among others.

Panellists explored how host city agreements, access and equity planning, and the industry's role as active enabler, not just sponsor, can combine to deliver meaningful outcomes for communities.

From inspiration to habit

The second panel, ***From Inspiration to Habit***, examined what works at community level to turn event energy into lasting behaviour change, with a particular focus on underserved



youth. Panellists included Brianna Keys (Director of Social Impact, FIFA Host City New York New Jersey), Jennifer Sullivan (COO, New York City Football Club), Tom Farrey (Executive Director, Sports & Society Programme, Aspen Institute), Laurie Whitsel (Physical Activity Alliance Adviser and VP, American Heart Association), Yasmine Oucherif (Generation 2026: Youth Media Forward Ambassador), Hector Moyeton (Ahsoka Changemakers) and Andy Jenkins (Director of Youth Development, South Bronx United).

The panel discussions and supporting breakouts produced five key principles to advance the youth participation legacy from major sporting events and reach the young people who stand to benefit the most.

WFSGI will work with participants and other interested stakeholders to bring these five principles to Governments at next year's World Health Assembly in Geneva.

##Ends##

About WFSGI

The World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry (WFSGI) is the global trade association representing the sporting goods industry, with 150 member companies accounting for approximately 70% of global sporting goods turnover. WFSGI works at the intersection of sport, business and public policy to drive a healthier, more active planet for all. The federation is the Recognised Organisation for Sporting Goods in the Olympic Movement and has Official Relations with the World Health Organisation to support global physical activity goals. www.wfsgi.org

[WFSGI Physical Activity Impact Report 2025: Moving the World Towards an Active Future | WFSGI - World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry](#)

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