



FIFA[®]
CONFERENCE FOR
EQUALITY & INCLUSION 2017

MAKING EQUALITY A REALITY



“The future of football belongs to women.”

Foreword

It is clear for all to see how football touches the hearts of millions of people across the globe, regardless of gender, origin, age group, social status or religious belief. This implies a tremendous power. To the point that, if we imbue football with the right principles, these principles will inevitably be mirrored in other walks of life.

We know this, and we have been fully committed to embracing equality and inclusion as two of our nurturing principles. And not only through words, but concrete action: such is the reasoning behind this year’s FIFA Conference for Equality and Inclusion and its theme, “Making Equality a Reality”. FIFA moved closer to this reality in February 2016, when it adopted a reformed set of Statutes that positions the promotion of women as an explicit objective and ensures a minimum of six women on the organisation’s strategic body, the FIFA Council.

But we went beyond the legal framework. Stronger participation of women in football has become one of the overarching goals that permeate everything that we do. FIFA now has more women than ever in key management positions – starting with our Secretary General, Fatma Samoura. The representation of women on our standing committees, too, has risen to an unprecedented level. For the first time ever, FIFA has a dedicated Women’s

Football Division, entrusted with the task of executing a strategy to bring the women's game into the mainstream. These may not be the definitive solutions yet, but they are concrete steps in the right direction.

This conference represents another one of these steps. It acts as a means of embodying one of the pillars of FIFA 2.0, our vision for the future to bring the game to all. In fact, one of the key concrete objectives set in that document is related to the growth of women's football: by 2026, we intend to double, to 60 million, the number of female players around the world. An ambitious pledge – but it is no more than the cause deserves.

FIFA cannot – and will not – do this alone. It is our duty, as men and women alike, to encourage the confederations and member associations to adopt equality and inclusivity as unequivocal guiding principles. This is not a question of gender or ethnicity. It is a question of humanity.

Welcome to the FIFA Conference for Equality and Inclusion 2017. In its third year, this has become an important platform for dialogue and concrete action. We now look forward to hearing from you and working with you to make a difference.



Gianni Infantino
FIFA President



FIFA
CONFERENCE FOR
EQUALITY & INCLUSION 2017
Zürich - 6 March

#FIFA4Equality

Carli Lloyd – FIFA Women’s World Cup™ winner and FIFA Women’s Player of the Year 2015 and 2016



Marcelo is a Brazilian professional footballer who plays for Spanish club Real Madrid.

Programme

Welcome Moderator: *Sherine Tadros*, Head of Amnesty International's New York office

08:30 Registration

09:00 Kick-off

Introduction by *Honey Thaljieh*, FIFA Corporate Communications Manager

Official welcome by FIFA President *Gianni Infantino*

09:20 KEYNOTE SPEECH

Lakshmi Puri, Deputy Executive Director of UN Women

Session I

09:35

Progressing towards gender equality

- What stands in the way of gender equality?
- Women in football: players, coaches, referees and decision-makers
- Equality and equal pay in sport
- Evaluating progress and looking ahead

Panellists

Sarai Bareman

FIFA Chief Women's Football Officer

Dr Susan Bridgewater

Professor of Sports Management & Marketing, University of Liverpool

Sylvie Durrer

Director of the Swiss Federal Office for Gender Equality

Khalida Popal

Former captain of the Afghan women's national football team

Piara Powar

Executive Director of the Fare network

Break

11:00

Coffee break

Session II

11:25

Men as equal agents of change

- What are the roles and responsibilities of men?
- The experiences of women leaders
- The other side of gender: how to engage men
- Creating change in FIFA's 211 member associations

Panellists

<i>Layhoon Chan</i>	President of Valencia CF
<i>Joyce Cook</i>	FIFA Chief Member Associations Officer
<i>Martin Glenn</i>	Chief Executive Officer of The Football Association
<i>Anthony Keedi</i>	Psychologist and gender specialist
<i>Keme Nzerem</i>	Channel 4 News journalist

Break

12:45 Lunch break

14:00 Keynote conversation

Karina LeBlanc (Former Canada goalkeeper & UNICEF ambassador) &
Clarence Seedorf (FIFA Legend)

Session III

14:30

Strength in diversity: achieving inclusion in/through sport

- Empowering women from diverse backgrounds
- Ensuring inclusion in sport and diversity in leadership
- Fighting racism and sexism in sport
- Sport as tool for inclusion and humanitarian work

Panellists

<i>Abhijeet Barse</i>	Chief Executive Director, Slum Soccer
<i>Vladimir Borkovic</i>	Network Director, streetfootballworld
<i>Thomas Hitzlsperger</i>	Former captain of the German men's national team
<i>Raha Moharrak</i>	First Saudi woman to conquer Mount Everest
<i>Hala Ousta</i>	Diversity and Inclusion Manager, Scottish Football Association

Close

15:45 Wrap-up and Q&A

16:10 CLOSING REMARKS by FIFA Secretary General *Fatma Samoura*
followed by drinks reception



Fatma Samoura

FIFA Secretary General

After starting her United Nations career in Rome as a senior logistics officer with the World Food Programme in 1995, Fatma served as a country representative or Deputy Humanitarian coordinator in seven countries: Djibouti, Cameroon, Chad, Guinea, Niger, Madagascar and Nigeria. In a humanitarian career with the United Nations that spanned 21 years, she managed to initiate and lead several development and humanitarian programmes across the globe. Countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Europe have all benefited from her skills in programme and operations management. Her leadership and vision has helped empower women and young people, change lives and protect the environment.

With significant experience in complex development, socio-economic, political and security situations, Fatma has helped countries to respond to various socio-political, economic, humanitarian, security and human rights challenges. She has been able to make a difference for millions of people through her work in the UN, and has now stepped into her new role at FIFA to help change the world through football as the first-ever female Secretary General of world football's governing body.

“Football should transcend barriers, whether cultural, political, racial, ethnic or gender-based.”



“There is no such thing as a just society that doesn’t empower women.”

Sherine Tadros

Head of Amnesty International’s UN Office in New York

Before joining Amnesty International in August 2016 as Head of the UN Office in New York, Sherine was a senior international correspondent and anchor for Sky News and Al Jazeera English covering stories across the globe, based first in Europe and then the Middle East.

An internationally acclaimed journalist, Sherine’s recent recognition includes the Royal Television Society International News Coverage Award (2016) and the Peabody Award for coverage of the Arab Spring (2011). She was also a nominee for the Bayeux-Calvados War Correspondent of the Year (2015), the International Emmy Awards for coverage of the 2008 Gaza conflict (2009), and the Monte Carlo Award for an exclusive story on the Samouni family killings in Gaza (2009).

Sherine came to Amnesty International from Sky News, where she was the network’s Middle East correspondent. In this role, Sherine led investigations into, and presentations of, several human rights and conflict issues across the MENA region, and set up – as Bureau Chief – Sky’s first office in Egypt.

Before she joined Sky News, Sherine served in various roles at Al Jazeera English, including as a foreign correspondent in Beirut, Jerusalem, Gaza and Cairo and finally as a news anchor in Doha, Qatar. In 2011, Sherine was an integral part of the network’s coverage of the Arab Spring, reporting extensively from Egypt, Libya and Yemen. Before Al Jazeera, Sherine served on the faculty of SOAS.

Sherine holds an MSc in Middle East Politics (*cum laude*) from SOAS, and a BA (Hons) in Politics (*cum laude*), also from SOAS.



Ms Lakshmi Puri

Deputy Executive Director of UN Women

Lakshmi Puri is Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Deputy Executive Director of UN Women, responsible for the Bureau for Intergovernmental Support, UN System Coordination, and Strategic Partnerships. She was the Acting Head of UN Women from March to August 2013.

Lakshmi has multifaceted experience in bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, negotiations and advocacy spanning a wide range of issues, including peace and security, human rights, sustainable development, climate change, gender equality, trade and development and humanitarian action. She has led UN Women's action in successfully advocating for the prioritisation and integration of gender equality and the empowerment of women in intergovernmental processes and outcomes, and in enhancing its convening power at the highest political level to unprecedented levels. She steered partnership-building with key constituencies and stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, academia and other stakeholders. She provided the vision and drive for many of UN Women's public campaigns, including UNITE to End Violence Against Women and Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality. She has also promoted coordination and accountability of the United Nations system for gender equality. She has been a thought leader, a passionate and committed global advocate and has been keenly engaged in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment across all regions and sectors.

“Women widen perspectives, bring in new ideas and innovations, and reach new audiences. Creating a diverse FIFA and sports world is not only a matter of fair play, but it is also smart business.”



Sarai Bareman

FIFA Chief Women's Football Officer

Sarai joined FIFA in November 2016 to lead the newly established Women's Football Division as the first-ever Chief Women's Football Officer. As the sole female member of the 2016 FIFA Reform Committee, she advocated in favour of concrete requirements to secure the presence of more women in leadership positions and more resources for women's football. She has become one of those leaders herself and someone in a position to promote the implementation of concrete measures.

Born in Auckland, New Zealand to a Samoan mother and Dutch father, Sarai played football for 20 years, representing Samoa's women's national team. After a 12-year career in the banking and finance industry in New Zealand, she moved to Samoa and started her career in football administration working for the Samoan Football Association, which had just gone through a normalisation process conducted by FIFA.

Following two years of rebuilding the financial management of the association, Sarai took over as CEO and continued to grow and develop the sport of football in the country. In July 2014, she moved back to New Zealand to take up the position of Operations Manager at the Oceania Football Confederation. Shortly thereafter, Sarai was promoted to Deputy General Secretary and from that role, she kept on working diligently towards the growth of football, of the women's game and beyond.

"There is huge worldwide movement at the moment on gender equality and women's rights. The question is – what can we do concretely to ensure that it's not just 'noise' but also action?"



Professor Sue Bridgewater PhD

Professor of Sports Management & Marketing, University of Liverpool

Professor Sue Bridgewater has worked in higher education for the Universities of Liverpool and previously Warwick for over 20 years. Her background and PhD are in international business and emerging markets. She has published papers on football and sports business, in international journals and has authored books including *Football Brands and Football Management*.

Sue is Director of the Centre for Sports Business at the University of Liverpool, teaches on their Football Industries MBA and – for the past 15 years – has provided football manager statistics and designed plus directs and teaches on the League Managers Association's Diploma leadership and management course for elite football coaches and managers. Past students include Mark Hughes, Ole Gunnar Solskjær, Chris Hughton and Sean Dyche.

Sue is on the Research and Grants Awards panel of UEFA and the Advisory Board of the League Managers Association (LMA). Amongst other topics, she has researched and published reports for the LMA, the English FA and PFA, the Department of Culture and Media & Sport, Sport England and Women in Football. She has published on many topics including ethnicity and football coaches and managers, gender and leadership and multicultural management.

"I owe a lot to the many excellent women I have worked with in business and in football. I owe still more to the many excellent men, without whose support and mentoring I would not be where I am now."



Sylvie Durrer

Director of the Swiss Federal Office for Gender Equality

Sylvie has been Director of the Swiss Federal Office for Gender Equality since 2011, having previously occupied a similar position in the canton of Vaud. She has an in-depth knowledge of gender issues and public policy on equal rights and equal opportunities, particularly in the areas of employment, training and family.

She has been a member of the Gender Equality Commission of the Council of Europe and regularly leads the delegation representing Switzerland in UN Commissions. She has also chaired various committees at cantonal, inter-cantonal and national level, dealing in particular with issues of equal pay and of domestic violence. She is co-chairman of the Swiss Conference of Gender Equality Delegates.

In the first phase of her career, Sylvie taught and carried out research in French linguistics, especially at the Universities of Lausanne and Zurich, rising to the position of professor. As an academic, she was co-director of the Lake Geneva Gender Studies Doctoral Programme. She is the author of many scientific articles and several books, dealing in particular with the issue of gender and media.

“Non-profit organisations have to analyse their wage policies with regard to gender equity, demonstrate that they fully respect the law and let the wider public know about it.”



Khalida Popal

Former captain of the Afghan women's national football team

Khalida Popal was born in Kabul, Afghanistan in 1987 to a well-educated and open-minded mother who, as a teacher, wanted her daughter to take part in sport. She was one of the first women to play football in Afghanistan and thus one of the first to play for her country. While playing for the national team, she started working as a finance officer for the Afghanistan Football association, and became chairperson of the Afghanistan Women's Football Committee. She was actually the first female employee in the association's history.

While the Taliban no longer controlled the government at this time, conservative voices, uncomfortable with the idea of football as an appropriate activity for women, targeted Khalida, threatening her and her family. They spread rumours that she was anti-Afghanistan and against Islam and eventually gave her an ultimatum: stop playing and leading women's football or else. Her brother and coach were beaten and told to force Khalida to abandon her work.

In April 2011, in danger of her life and without her family, Khalida abruptly left Afghanistan, fleeing to India, from where she sought asylum in Denmark. She vowed to continue to fight for Afghan women to have equal rights and opportunities, even if it was from afar.

Now 28, she lives in Denmark, where she studies at the Copenhagen Business Academy and is the Programme Director for the Afghanistan women's national team. She has spoken at the United Nations and at various human rights conferences around the world.

"Make a noise, ask for what you want. Remember, nobody gives you your rights – you have to stand up and get them."



Piara Powar

Executive Director, Fare network

Piara Powar is the Executive Director of the Fare network, an anti-discrimination and social inclusion body in football.

The network is active in over 40 countries working with NGOs, fan groups, federations and others. It has worked closely with European institutions such as the European Commission and the Council of Europe and football bodies such as UEFA and FIFA.

Piara has over 15 years' experience of working in football as a campaigner and communications specialist. He was a member of the FIFA Task Force Against Racism and Discrimination.

“What we do on equality and inclusion underpins all of our values and priorities. The research data tells us where there is equality and inclusivity success usually follows. Empower a woman and you empower a generation.”



Layhoon Chan

Chairwoman of Valencia CF

Layhoon Chan has been Chairwoman of Valencia Club de Fútbol since December 2014, and has recently also been appointed as a member of the board of directors of the Spanish Football Association (RFEF) and of the Delegate Committee of *La Liga*. She was the driving force behind the partnership signed in 2015 between Valencia CF and UN Women in support of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Layhoon oversees Peter Lim's investment portfolio and philanthropic work, which saw him named one of the world's top philanthropists in 2012.

She has served as a director of publicly listed companies in Singapore. Before joining Valencia CF, she was the Executive Chairman of Thomson Medical Pte Ltd, one of Southeast Asia's largest private medical service providers for women and children.

She also sits on the boards of several global companies, including McLaren Automotive Limited, McLaren Automotive Asia and Meriton Holdings Limited. She is a board member of the Singapore Olympic Foundation, a non-profit organisation set up by the Singapore National Olympic Council.

Layhoon graduated with a Bachelor of Accountancy degree from the National University of Singapore in 1985.

"We have been partners of UN Women in the fight for gender equality since 2015. We work with the fundamental premise that we do not focus on gender equality as recognition of a collective, but rather see it as a question of human rights."



Joyce Cook

FIFA Chief Member Associations Officer

Joyce joined FIFA in November 2016 as Chief Member Associations Officer. She was assigned with the task of implementing a key element of FIFA's new vision for the future – the FIFA Forward Programme, an ambitious initiative that more than triples FIFA's financial support to member associations for football development.

A passionate advocate of equality and inclusion in sport with a broad knowledge of football structures, Joyce has a proven record of developing and delivering diversity and inclusion projects at both national and international levels. She is also internationally recognised as an expert adviser on accessible stadiums and the built environment for sports events and services, including the bid books developed by FIFA and UEFA for their flagship tournaments.

Before joining FIFA, Joyce was a board member of the Football Against Racism in Europe (FARE) network, a director of Women in Football (UK), as well as the founder and managing director of the Centre for Access to Football in Europe (CAFE). At FIFA, Joyce was part of the jury for the first FIFA Diversity Award, which was presented to Indian NGO Slum Soccer in September 2016, and during the 2014 FIFA World Cup™, she supported a project to offer audio-descriptive commentary for partially sighted and blind fans.

“Football can inspire us and it offers us a sense of well-being and of belonging. In return, it is our job to take care of our beautiful game and to cherish the many richly diverse people within it. Football belongs to each and every one of us. These are very exciting times for us all.”



Martin Glenn

The FA's Chief Executive Officer

The FA's Chief Executive Officer since 18 May 2015, Martin is a veteran of industry and has built up a reputation for making well-loved British brands more dynamic, competitive and international in their reach.

Prior to joining The FA, Martin was CEO at United Biscuits, a GBP 1bn company that is home to the McVitie's and Jacobs brands and with a rapidly growing international division. He came to prominence during his time at Walkers Snack Foods in 1992, enlisting England's third-highest goalscorer of all time, Gary Lineker, to play a key promotional role in his marketing campaigns. Having increased Walkers' market share from the mid-20% range to more than 60%, he became company president in 1998 and ran the business till 2006, when he left to join Birdseye, which had been acquired from Unilever for GBP 1.2bn. In 2003, he was awarded Marketing Week's CEO of the Year, and in 2004 was voted the UK's most influential marketer by Marketing Magazine.

An FA-qualified grassroots coach, Martin is also a former Leicester City FC non-executive director, having sat on the club's board between 2002 and 2006. Martin has also worked for Cadbury Schweppes, Mars and Deloitte, and is president of the Marketing Society, having started a two-year term in January 2014.

"When the FA was founded in 1863, the toast that was raised that evening was 'football irrespective of class or creed', and what was true in 1863 needs to be brought to life today."

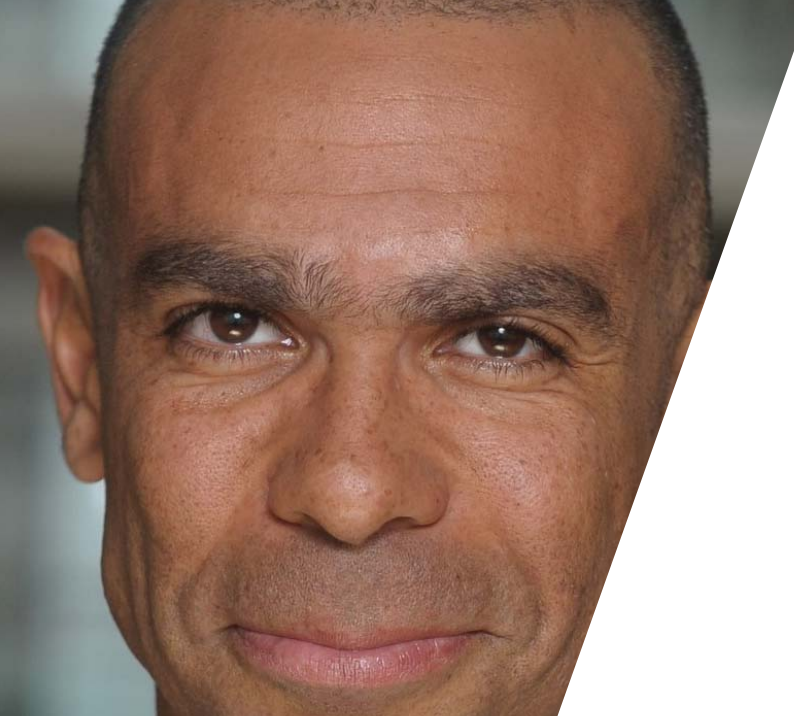


Anthony Keedi

Psychologist and gender specialist

Anthony Keedi is a psychologist and the Masculinities Program Technical Advisor at ABAAD. He has been working in the Lebanon for the past ten years, piloting the concept of engaging men in End Violence Against Women (EVAW). Thus far, he has contributed to creating local forums of men standing to end gender-based violence (GBV) in rural areas, overseen the first-ever White Ribbon Campaign in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), written several workbooks for facilitating discussions on gender equality (GE) with adolescents and young adults, worked with refugee men on raising their awareness on GBV, GE, and stress and anger management, authored qualitative research about masculinities, violence and conflict, overseen quantitative research on masculinities in Lebanon, and helped establish the first psychological rehabilitation clinic for men with abusive behaviours in the MENA.

“Football is about teamwork, fair play, and respect. Gender equality promotes those same concepts. In a world where women and men are one team, with fair play and respect, everyone wins.”



Keme Nzerem

Channel 4 News journalist

Keme Nzerem is a correspondent for Channel 4 News, the UK's leading daily TV news programme. He covered the FIFA World Cups™ in South Africa and Brazil and the UEFA European Championships in Poland/Ukraine and France. Keme has covered some of the biggest news events in sport – for example, doping in athletics and cycling. Away from sport, Keme's interests are equality and social justice. He was previously based in the US as Channel 4 News' Washington reporter, and has worked on stories across the world – from Russia, to Jamaica, to South Korea. He is a father of two young (football-playing) girls, and a trustee of Football Beyond Borders, a small football charity working with disadvantaged youth in the UK.

“Given recent events, FIFA’s credibility is at stake at all levels. If it is to deliver football the future it deserves, FIFA must ensure equality and inclusion for players, fans and staff of all backgrounds.”



Karina LeBlanc

Former Canada national team goalkeeper and UNICEF Ambassador

A former Olympian and professional footballer, Karina is a bronze medallist and the longest-serving player of the Canadian team, having played for nearly 18 years and participated in five FIFA World Cups and two Olympic Games.

Karina has changed from a shy and bullied immigrant girl who did not fit in to a proud and confident woman. It was through sport that she discovered her voice and purpose in life. She was the first female professional footballer to become a UNICEF Ambassador, and she has also developed into an accomplished motivational speaker, on-air personality, host and emcee.

In 2016, Karina was one of 30 participants from around the world selected for the FIFA Female Leadership Development Programme, which is designed for women who FIFA believes have the potential to become global leaders.

“Football has the ability to empower and connect people, while not discriminating against race, gender or religion. I have seen this in my experiences because it can be the one place where people come together to encourage one another to achieve a greater goal far beyond just the sport.”



Clarence Seedorf

Dutch coach, football legend, philanthropist and entrepreneur

Suriname-born Clarence is a four-time winner of the UEFA Champions League and the only player in history to have won the trophy with three different clubs (Ajax, Real Madrid and AC Milan). In his 23-year career, Clarence played more than 1,000 games at domestic and international level.

As well as being one of the most successful players in history, Clarence has received the highest civil decorations from both Suriname and Holland for his sporting and social achievements. In 2004, he was selected by Pelé as one of the FIFA 100 list of the greatest living footballers and he was one of the five Legacy Champions chosen by Nelson Mandela to spread his message around the world.

Fluent in six languages, Clarence has been a New York Times blogger and a pundit on mainstream media around the world. A philanthropist at heart, Clarence has been a UEFA Global Ambassador for Diversity & Change since 2015 and, at FIFA, he was a member of the jury for the first FIFA Diversity Award in 2016. Clarence is also part of the Real Madrid Legends team and a popular public speaker in both the business and academic worlds.

“We all have the responsibility to create a more inclusive society where people have equal opportunities to prove their worth and continue to be inspired following their dreams. Diversity is a precious resource with which we must enrich society for generations to come.”



Abhijeet Barse

Chief Executive Director, Slum Soccer

Abhijeet Barse is responsible for the rapid scaling of Slum Soccer, which has more than quadrupled the organisation's outreach in his tenure as CEO. Abhijeet has revitalised Slum Soccer's football-based curriculum through effective engagement with a focus on women's empowerment, hygiene, nutrition and social inclusion. His work also led to the organisation being awarded the FIFA Diversity Award in September 2016. His strengths lie in overcoming challenges of limited resources and financial constraints to design and deliver high-quality, cost-effective and comprehensive football for development programmes.

Abhijeet was elected to the network board of streetfootballworld (a strategic alliance partner of FIFA), where he served for two years with distinction. He is an accomplished public speaker and has delivered TEDx talks at Nagpur and VIT Vellore in addition to heading a panel of experts at "Goal 2015", an international convention on football business organised by the FICCI.

Abhijeet is an International Ambassador for the National Children's Football Alliance. He is an Acumen Fellow (class of 2014) and the 2015 winner of the Game Changer award conferred by the HR Club of Mumbai. He also completed the executive programme for non-profit leaders at Stanford Business School in August 2015.

"Football has the power to change the world and can bring the best out of you. I have seen this happening with my own eyes."



Dr Vladimir Borkovic

Network Director, streetfootballworld

Dr Vladimir Borkovic is the co-founder, Network Director and Chief Operating Officer of streetfootballworld. When founding streetfootballworld in 2002, Vladimir declared that he would dedicate the next 20 years to its development – not long to go now! In the meantime, he has made networking become his lifestyle and uses his doctor title only in cases of emergency. With a doctorate in Human Sciences from the University of Potsdam, Germany, his expertise lies in applied socialisation theory, as well as monitoring and evaluating community sports programmes. Vladimir is a lecturer and tutor for the FIFA Master in Management, Law and Humanities of Sport and a guest lecturer at several universities worldwide.

“The world today is becoming more and more diverse. It is our responsibility, as shapers of today, to create an environment for the future generations that will respect and nurture diversity as a medium of progress. Only like this we will be able to overcome the boundaries of stigma and create a world where our children will live in peace.”

Thomas Hitzlsperger

Former captain of the German men's national team

Having debuted for the German national team on 9 October 2004 when Germany beat Iran 2-0 in Tehran, Thomas Hitzlsperger went on to earn 52 caps, and was part of the squads that came third at the 2006 World Cup and second at EURO 2008 before retiring from international football in August 2010.

At club level, he spent his most important years as a professional playing for Aston Villa and VfB Stuttgart. Between 2001 and 2005, he made 99 league appearances for the Premier League side, where he gained the nickname "The Hammer" due to his powerful long-range shots. He played 125 matches for VfB Stuttgart from 2005 to 2010 and won the 2006-2007 *Bundesliga*. On 5 June 2016, Hitzlsperger was appointed by the VfB Stuttgart board to take up a special role liaising between the first team squad and the club's leadership.

In recognition of his commitment against racism and political extremism, Thomas Hitzlsperger received the German Football Association's Julius Hirsch Award in 2011. His coming out as a homosexual in early 2014 won him widespread respect and admiration. In interviews with the German weekly *Die Zeit* and the British daily *The Guardian*, the 52-capped former international spoke with frankness and sensitivity about his homosexuality and homophobia in the game.



"Six World Cups, 11 European Championships and 11 Olympic medals – the combined record of the German men's and women's national teams makes for impressive reading. Diversity does not just add colour to German football, it also makes it more successful".



Raha Moharrak

The first Saudi woman to conquer Mount Everest

Always a curious child, for as long as she can remember, Raha dreamt of challenging adventures, seeing the world and perhaps even changing it. From a young age, her unconventionality was obvious, and she was blessed with parents who never asked her to change, teaching her to dream big and live even bigger, and raising her with the belief that life is what you make it, and her dreams show that anything is possible.

Graduating with a BA in Visual Communications from the American University of Sharjah, Raha started her career at a leading advertising agency. Her life changed the day she climbed Kilimanjaro and challenged herself, her society and culture. It was there, between the clouds, standing on the “roof of Africa”, where her spirit could no longer be silenced and nothing could hold her back from her love of adventure. Kilimanjaro opened the doors to eight more summits, but still her love affair with high altitudes was insatiable and her curiosity as to where her limits were grew even stronger. Just when she thought she had reached them, she set eyes on Everest, and the dream that turned her into an accidental role model was born on 18 May 2013, when a year after seeing the legendary mountain, Raha made history by being the first Saudi woman to climb it.

Her achievements demonstrate that we can all attempt the impossible and maybe even achieve it, no matter where we are from. She is living proof that if children are raised to be confident and curious of the world around them, and not to apologise for who they are, they are capable of anything: even a Saudi woman can stand on top of the world.

“Be curious enough to discover, get lost enough to be found and brave enough to take the first step.”



Hala Ousta

Diversity and Inclusion Manager, Scottish Football Association

As Diversity and Inclusion Manager for the Scottish Football Association, Hala is an established campaigner for equality, diversity and sports at several levels.

Having a Masters in Public Policy and a post-graduate diploma in Equality & Discrimination, her experience covers a wide range of roles and responsibilities relating to equality and sports development.

She currently sits on the board of Women in Football, sportscotland and Icon Awards, with advisory roles on the Scotland Advisory Committee of the British Council, and is involved in UEFA's Captains of Change programme. In addition, she founded and chairs Inspiring Women – Scotland, an organisation promoting empowerment and leadership for multicultural young women.

In addition, she has recently been chosen as one of the UK's 30 under-30 Sports Industry Group NextGen Leaders 2017, which recognises and rewards rising industry stars.

"It is crucial that we, as a collective society, continue to empower the diverse women and inspire a cultural shift towards advancing their equality, participation, leadership and active citizenship in all aspects of life. Through football and sport, we can foster their proactive voice and present a unique platform to achieving this."

Fédération Internationale de Football Association

FIFA-Strasse 20 P.O. Box 8044 Zurich Switzerland

T: +41 (0)43 222 7777 F: +41 (0)43 222 7878 FIFA.com